

# DIRECTIONS

FOR

## Married Persons :

DESCRIBING

The DUTIES common to both,

And peculiar to each of them.

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By WILLIAM WHATELEY.

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L O N D O N :

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T O T H E

# Christian Reader.

CHRISTIAN READER,

**M**ARRIAGE hath scarce more that use it, than that accuse it. Most men enter into this estate, and being entered, complain thereof. They should rather complain of themselves. It is an unjust thing, and a fruit of ignorant pride, to cast the blame of our grievances upon God's ordinances. I had been happy, saith one, had I not been married. Then wast thou foolish both before and since thy marriage. Use it well, it shall add to thine happiness. We make bitter sauce, and cry out that the meat is bitter. Thou livest in Matrimony not after God's direction, but the rules (crooked rules they be) of thine own lusts, and then sayest, Oh that I had never married! O that I were unmarried! For shame keep silence! thy crying shews thy disease. Thou art indeed married to an ill companion, (thy wicked flesh, that old husband) and art pestered with its brood, and neither seekest a divorce from this tyrant, nor endeavourest to crucify the wick-

ed offspring thereof. Hence are thy woes ; not thy husband, not thy wife, but thy pride, thy passion, cause all this annoyance, all this discontentment.

I labour, in this little treatise, to plead the cause of Marriage ; not so much in speech, as in deed, by directing the married to the knowledge and practice of their duties, which would mend all. These whatsoever man or woman endeavour to follow, if they prove not marriage a solace to their souls, and a refreshing to their other griefs, let me never but grieve.

These things I commend to thine understanding, to thy life. Use them, and then say how thou speedest. I intended them at first for a few, and now communicate them to many. It is no uncharitable (I am sure) I hope, no unprofitable deed. I desire that thou shouldest make use of them, therefore I make them public : If not, be ignorant, and complain still. I mean them not to the learned, that can find out better directions for themselves ; but to those whose place is not too good to learn of the meanest teacher, even unto men of the same rank, as they for the most part were, to whom I spake them. If this work profit, I am glad, then I know it shall please. However, thou hast it, reader, and better shouldest have had, if my store afforded any better. So I commend thee to the Lord.

Thine in the Lord,

W. W.

DIRECTIONS



## DIRECTIONS

FOR

## MARRIED PERSONS.

## CHAP. I.

*Shewing the first principle duty of the married, viz.  
Chastity.*

**I** MUST rank these duties under their several heads, for the better help of mine own and your memories. They are all of two sorts; some principal, and some less principal. The principal I term those which are of the very essence of Matrimony; the less principal, those which are necessary to its well-being. The breach of the former dissolveth the bond, the breach of the latter only disturbs the society; if those be violated the obligation is void; if those be observed (notwithstanding other imperfections) the bond remaineth entire, though not without a world of unhappiness. These main duties are only two; *chastity and due benevolence*. The restraining of themselves from all other persons, and the communicating of themselves each to other. For the first of these two: the covenant that passeth between yoke-fellows, doth make it utterly unlawful for them upon any occasion, at any time, (whilst the covenant remaineth in force) to give their bodies to any other. This duty is so manifest, that no man can pretend ignorance of it. The law of God, the law of nature, the laws of all well-or-

dered societies, do enjoin it. It is written in every man's breast, and none can chuse, but read it in his own conscience, if long continuance in wilful sinning have not put his eyes quite out. This sin doth untie the knot of marriage, and annihilate the covenant first made; so that the party wronged, is free from the law of his husband or wife, and at his or her own choice, whether he or she will accept again of such a perfidious yoke-fellow: for our Saviour himself, that utterly disalloweth other divorces, doth yet allow divorce, in case of adultery. But if it be demanded, whether the party wronged, may lawfully admit the wrong-doer again, after the offence is known? I answer, that in case the offenders (having been overtaken through temptation, or perhaps having presumptuously offended) shall, by apparent signs, make known their true design of amendment, and purpose of reformation, then it is very convenient, that this offence also be pardoned by the yoke-fellow. For the greatest love, should bury the greatest wrongs, so far as God forbiddeth not to bury them: And we read not of any commandment, enjoining the wronged person to make a final separation. But if the delinquent persist in his transgression, and declare himself to be a person irreformable, then the party wronged, is bound in conscience, if he can convict it, as to complain of the sin, so to withdraw himself from the sinner. That married persons ought to live chastly in marriage, all will yield; only some may perhaps plead weakness and say, that they would, but are not able. To whom I say, if indeed they be willing, it shall not be hard to get power. No Directions can reform the wilful sinner; but to him that desireth not to sin, a way may be shewed of attaining his desire; and chastity may be gotten if men will carefully labour for it. And for an introduction unto those directions, which we have to give in this point, let this one thing be observed: that there are some men and women that bring their bodies undefiled unto marriage.

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To these it will prove more easy to remain pure in it. Others have polluted themselves before their entrance into this estate ; and these shall find, that marriage will more hardly make them honest : for marriage is like salt, that will preserve sweet meat from tainting, but cannot restore tainted meat to its former sweetness. Wherefore those that have been stained with uncleanness before, must heartily bewail before God, their former lewd behaviour, else marriage will never prevail to contain their desires within compass. But now to the matter we were about to speak of : a man that hath either come clean unto marriage, or else unfeignedly repented of his former uncleanness, shall be strengthened against adultery, by the practice of these things following : First, a constant and conscientious care of performing private religious exercises (*viz.* reading, praying, meditating, and the like) will so purify the heart, that by means of them, a Christian man shall become conqueror over those sins which seem most unconquerable, whilst a man is negligent in them, if he does not omit them altogether. Prayer and meditation will breed wisdom ; and wisdom entering into the soul, will preserve a man from the stranger that flatters with her lips. The word of God, digested by prayer and meditation, will be as a sword in the hand of a valiant man, to cut off the neck of these lusts, as fast as they make head against the soul. Especially a man given to this sin, must often read and think of those portions of scripture, that condemn, disgrace, threaten this sin, and must often and seriously muse of the dangerousness of it, and make his peculiar petitions to God, for power against it ; and thus arming himself most strongly, where he finds himself soonest wounded, he shall be sure to escape these wounds.

Secondly, Painfulness in one's calling, must divert the mind from all inflaming fancies, and find the soul and body both so much employment, in things of a lawful and useful nature, that there  
may



may be no leifure for fuch unlawful conceits. It is certain, an idle perfon, if occafion, and his bodily conftitution ferve, will at laft prove adulterous ; but the diligent hand, joined with hearty prayer to God, will preserve a man (at leaft a married man) pure and undefiled. Wherefore let every man, that longeth to be free from this offence, fhun idlenefs, and embrace bufinefs : let him chufe a calling wherein to walk, and give diligent attendance upon his calling ; let his hand or head, or both, be ftill fet at work in fomething that belongs to his vocation ; and when his calling (I mean his particular calling) ceafeth to require, or need his prefence, let the works of his general calling (efpecially thofe acts of religion formerly mentioned) take up his mind and thoughts, fo fhall he be fure to fave himfelf from the danger of this wickednefs.

Thirdly, Temperance in diet muft be called in to the aid of chaftity. It is eafy to put out the fire by withdrawing fuel, at leaft to keep the flame within the chimney. When the blood and fpirits are inflamed with meat and drink, not only the body is apter to entertain the impreffions of luft, but the foul alfo is unable to confider any good thing that fhould repel fuch motions : but a body kept from fulnefs, yields itfelf to the foul with more eafe. Let him, therefore, be duly fparing in his food, that defireth to be chafte in his marriage.

Fourthly, He that would be free from adultery, muft fhun the corner of the harlot's houfe, and not come near the place (if he can chufe) where fuch an one dwelleth, as might caufe him to offend : He muft refolutely debar himfelf the fociety of fuch, and keep himfelf from places, times, companies that may folicit ; and to that end he muft refift by prayer, the firft motions of this wickednefs. When *Solomon* had faid, that he was void of underftanding that did commit adultery ; he adds further, he fhall not be innocent that toucheth her. Dalliance will breed whoredom unavoidably ;

unavoidably ; and unseasonable company and place, will almost enforce to dalliance. Wherefore a man must preserve his innocency from the gross act of evil, by shunning all manner of dallying ; and that he may keep himself from touching her, he must flee from her, and be far away from the pit side, that might devour him. Shun, therefore, with all diligence, all opportunities of this wickedness ; especially shun (as a rock) the company of a person apt to tempt, or be tempted ; and consider, that even cold water will become hot, if it be set too near the fire. And these directions are such, as agree to all equally, married and unmarried.

There remaineth another help, peculiar to the married persons ; and that is the due and lawful enjoyment of marriage. The ordinance of God fail not to effect the things for which he appointed them, if our abuse of them do not hinder their efficacy. Now God hath ordained matrimony to prevent whoredom. Wherefore let marriage be used as it ought, and the married shall not miss of this effect thereof. And of chastity, one chief duty of the married, so much. Let us go forward to the second, which is due benevolence ; intreating you to take notice, that what shall be there spoken, will be exceeding helpful to this first duty also. We must teach you the lawful fruition of marriage, that you may attain to purity, one special end of marriage.



## C H A P. II.

*Treating of the second principal duty of the married,  
Due Benevolence.*

**T**HE Married are bound in conscience to afford to each other a mutual enjoyment of each other, according as either of their needs shall require. The scripture is as plain this way as may be.



be. *Let the man give unto the wife due benevolence, and also the wife unto the husband.* The word signifieth indebted benevolence. It is a debt, you hear, and all debts must be paid when they be required. *Those whom God hath joined (saith our Saviour) let no man put asunder.* And again, *Man shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh.* And again the apostle, *Let them not defraud each other.* And yet again, *The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband; neither hath the husband power over his own body, but the wife.* It is not in the power of either of them, whether or no they will live with each other: but they are bound in conscience to do it, and cannot without grievous sin deny it. Marriage is frustrate, if this duty be not performed, and the ordinance of God made void, unless those that live in it carry themselves according to his appointment this way. I deny not but that there may be a time of separation for some good space together, either for the public service of the country, or for needful private affairs, so that it be with consent and upon good grounds; but it is not lawful for a man or woman to leave each other, totally or finally, with a mind of not returning again to the former society.

But let us consider a little, what rules they must follow in this their society. Four things must be regarded about it, viz. that it be sanctified, seasonable, temperate, and willing.

First and chiefly the society of the married must be sanctified, that is, made holy and lawful unto them by the word of God and prayer. They must be both informed by the scriptures of the lawfulness of that their conjunction. For God hath said, *Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.* And again, *Marriage is honourable amongst all men, and the bed undefiled.* So that there wanteth not sufficient warrant, in most expresse words, to authorize the conscience of any man to take to himself the benefit of this ordinance. And besides this due information of the

the lawfulness of marriage, it is requisite that they solemnly crave the good leave of God, for the enjoyment of this his ordinance, and also his special blessing upon it, not forgetting to return him particular thanks for his infinite goodness in providing this necessary means of man's increase and comfort. This point is not to be denied of any, that will not deny the authority of *St. Paul*; for he doth expressly affirm, that marriage as well as meat and drink, is sanctified by prayer and thanksgiving. As therefore it would be a brutish profaneness for any man to sit down to his table, as an horse to the manger, and cram himself with viands, without craving the blessing of God first, and to return again thence as a fox from his prey, without returning any praise to the hand that gave him food and appetite: so it is likewise a great licentiousness for married people, as it were brute beasts, carried forward with the tide of their unruly appetites, to come together in marriage, forgetting or neglecting to receive the Lord's blessing, and to give him due praises for that his necessary and beneficial ordinance. Doth not every man's private welfare, and the public also, for the most part, depend upon the success of this society: The hope of posterity, the stay of old age, the comfort of weakness, the support of every man's house, together with the flourishing estate of every church and common-wealth, doth hang upon the fruit of matrimony; for if God send barrenness, or give either monstrous or wicked children, how great is the discontent in the former case, the vexation and torment in the latter? And if many families (as it were seminaries) be either empty of plants altogether, or pestered with ill plants, how shall the orchards of the church and common-wealth be stored with good wholesome trees?

How then can any man esteem it more than needs, to crave God's blessing in a thing wherein it so nearly concerneth him to attain it? Surely we should but provoke his curse against us, when  
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we either forget it as needless, or condemn it as ridiculous, to make our petitions unto him, for his blessing on his own institution. Yea, whereas marriage is instituted in part for the subduing of inordinate desires, it cannot be available for that purpose, unless the Lord give it that efficacy : and how can we expect that he should give it, if we scorn to beg it, or be thankful for it ? Yea, certainly, the men that use marriage in a brutish manner, not seeing God in it, nor sanctifying it by these means unto themselves, shall become thereby more licentious, more outrageous, more lustful, more impudent than ever they were before marriage : for what would be profitable to the soul in the holy and orderly use of it, in the abuse will ever prove as hurtful. Wherefore let no man scoff at a duty plainly commanded by God, but know that thou hast no reason to expect any blessing from God, unless thou prayest to God for it, and returnest to him the tribute of thanks for that which toucheth thee so nearly as the hope of posterity, and him as the increase of his kingdom. And if you will be Christians, be so in good earnest, and use all things christianly and sanctifiedly, and learn to know the force and fruit of prayer, even in all things. And so much for the first rule of due benevolence, it must be sanctified, without which, propagation and chastity, the two chief ends thereof, will either not be attained at all, or not with comfort.

It must further be temperate, I mean sparing. Men and women are reasonable creatures, and therefore must remember, that God hath ordained Matrimony, not for pleasure's sake chiefly, but for the increase of mankind, and not to kindle lustful desires, but to quench them. We must, I confess, take great heed of laying snares upon men's consciences in matters of this nature ; and must be very careful not to bind them, where God himself hath not bound them. Now for the scriptures, they do not set to men any particular limits in this matter, but only, in general, they commend  
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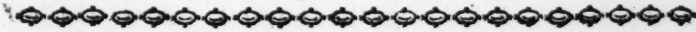
unto us sobriety and moderation, and acquaint us with the true ends of Matrimony. Now this is a certain and universal rule, that the quantity of every thing must, as near as we can, be fitted to the end. Health, and strength, and comfort, are the ends of food, therefore so much must be eaten, and no more, as will serve to the procuring of health, and strength, and comfort. The same rule must be applied to Matrimony. The married must not provoke desires for pleasure's-sake, but allay desires when they provoke themselves. They must not strive by words and gestures to enflame their passions, when they are cool. But when such passions are of themselves moved, then they must take the benefit of their estate to assuage them, that they may not be troublesome to them in the duties of religion, and of their callings. In a word, marriage must be used as seldom and sparingly as may stand with the need of the persons married: For excess this way doth weaken the body, and shorten life: but a sparing enjoyment would preserve the body from divers diseases in some constitutions. Excess inflameth lust, and disposeth the persons so offending to adultery. Moderation kills lust, and is a great furtherance to purity. Excess breeds satiety, and makes them weary of each other, desirous of strangers: Moderation endeareth them each to other, and breeds contentment in themselves. Excess disables them, without much unquietness, to endure separation, upon just causes; moderation makes it easy to abstain when need requireth. To conclude, excess hinders procreation; but moderateness is a help to fruitfulness. Wherefore the former general rule must be carefully observed; and the married must no oftener come together, than for the extinguishing of this passion ingrafted in the body, when it would otherwise become troublesome to them. If imagination and corruption provoke desires, the body not needing nor inforcing them, not marriage but prayer and humiliation must heat



this disease ; but when the motions arise from the bodily temper or fulness, the marriage bed was ordained for a remedy. Here therefore is great need of christian prudence : that they who strive for the mastery, may be temperate in all things : That although all things are lawful to them, yet they may not be brought under the power of any. But to satisfy the natural desires when unprovoked, they tend to unruliness ; this is a duty betwixt yoke-fellows, and this is the temperate enjoyment of God's ordinances, as for a man to drink when labour or other occasion hath made him thirsty. Now the sanctified use of marriage, will also procure it to be temperate ; but they seldom fail to exceed their bounds, that regard not to make their society holy by prayer and thanksgivings. But this society must have a third rule ; it must be seasonable, with a due distinguishing of the times of separation, from the times allowed for that purpose ; then must they not take the same liberty as at other times, they are for that season debarred their mutual benevolence in this kind. These be seasons when God and nature separate the man and wife in this respect. Now in any of these times it is forbidden to the husband to converse with his wife. This is plain in the law, *Lev.* xv. 19, 25. also chap. xviii. 19. chap. xx. 18. of all which places married people should take due notice. This is one of the sins also condemned by the prophet *Ezekiel*, chap. xxii. 18. It is also one of those faults for which the *Canaanites* did suffer that fearful destruction. And the Lord in making this constitution doth seem to have aimed at the good of posterity chiefly : For if it should fall out, that upon such unseasonable conversation any issue should follow, needs must the child inherit numerous diseases.

But a fourth direction must be given to the married in this point, cheerfulness and willingness must ever accompany their meetings ; neither must they deny themselves each to other in convenient times,

times, nor yet yield themselves with grudging and frowardness, but readily, and with all demonstrations of hearty affection. The scripture testifieth so much plainly, when it entitleth this duty by the name of good-will, and good-will that is owing. Now no man can call that good-will which is churlishly and discontentedly granted; and it is doubtless a part of great injustice to pay debts with grudgings and delays. This would alienate the heart of the yoke-fellow, and work in him or her a suspicion of estrangement of affection in the other party.



### C H A P. III.

#### *Of the love of married people.*

**T**HERE are also besides these, certain other duties of an inferior nature, which serve to make the lives of married people comfortable; and those, though they be not so essential to marriage as the former, are yet of so necessary observation, that without them Matrimony shall be nothing else but the mother of unseasonable repentance. These are likewise of two sorts, some common to both, some proper to each of them. The common are also of two kinds, some in regard of themselves, some in regard of their families. Now the covenant of matrimony doth bind those that enter upon it unto all these duties, as well as to the former, but not under the same forfeiture as it were. Failing in them doth break God's commandment very much, but it doth not break the bond of matrimony: It forfeiteth their mutual peace, comfort and happiness; it doth not forfeit their mutual right and power over each others bodies. Indeed such is the impenitency of man's

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nature,

nature, that soon will he conceit to himself a liberty where God gives him none at all. Most men and women are apt to think, that they have due cause not to endure the burden of living with such yoke-fellows as have no care to perform the duties that shall be named. But it is a very dangerous thing for us to account ourselves freed from our duty, by that which doth not free us. We must therefore cross the desires of our own hearts, and know that we are still bound to our yoke-fellows for all their hard usage in other things, so long as in the main matters we be not wronged. Thou art no less bound to continue an husband or wife, because thy yoke-fellow is utterly careless of such duties as shall be named. Arm thyself therefore with patience to bear the want of them, and take knowledge of them, not to make thyself falsely conceited of liberty, because thou dost not find them, but to make thyself careful of doing that which pertaineth to thee, though thy care be slenderly required.

Now let us lay open the special points of duty: And in general, for the common duties, let this be delivered as a never-failing rule. That whatsoever thing the common bonds of humanity and christianity tie every man to perform unto another, that the married persons are bound to perform each to other in a far higher degree; for the nearer band of Matrimony is so far from weakening, that it adds force to the more general bonds of humanity and religion: So that what the law of love and piety doth command thee to perform to any person as a man or a Christian, that it binds thee to perform unto thy yoke-fellow much more plentifully and diligently: And yet this also must be marked, that in these mutual duties, the husband is bound to be more abundant and careful, because his place is more excellent. These common duties look in part to themselves, in part unto their families. That they jointly owe to themselves, comes all to two heads, love, and the chief effects  
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of love. For love first, their hearts must be united as well as their bodies, else their union will prove more troublesome than can be imagined. Love is the life and soul of marriage, without which, it differs as much from itself, as a carcase from a living body; yea verily, it is a most uncomfortable society, and no better than a living death. This makes all things easy; the want of it makes all things hard. Love seasons and sweetens all estates; love composeth all controversies; love over-ruleth all passions; it squareth all actions; it is, in a word, the king of the heart, which, in whom it prevaileth, to them marriage is what it should be, *viz.* a pleasing combination of two persons into one home, one purse, one heart, and one flesh. Two things are necessary about this point: First, to shew what properties this love must have; next, to shew by what means it may be attained. Now the love of man and wife must have these two properties with, and above many other: First, it must be spiritual; secondly, matrimonial. It must be spiritual in its ground, and in its working. Love must be built principally upon the commandment of God, the only sure foundation of it. The God of Heaven, the maker of affections, must also be their commander; from whom we have received the power of loving, from him we must also receive directions for the right using that power. A Christian man must love his wife not only because she is beautiful, witty, dutiful, loving, but chiefly, because the Lord of Heaven and earth hath said, Husbands love your wives. The wife also must love her husband, not only, or chiefly because he is a proper man, of good means and parentage, kind to her and of good carriage, but because he is her husband, and God, the sovereign of all souls, has told women, that they ought to be lovers of their husbands. Not the face, portion, beauty, dowry, or good parts of the married, must be the principal causes of their loving each other, but the will of God,

that hath plainly manifested his pleasure in this matter. That affection which is grounded upon this stable foundation, will be lasting ; as is the cause that procures it : for the commandment of God in this matter, can never receive any alteration : But that affection that standeth upon other considerations, will be subject to changing every hour : For how can the building stand fast, if the foundation be rotten and slippery ? Either some storm of contention will over-throw that ill-grounded natural love, or of its own accord it will fall down through age ; or else it will degenerate into jealousy, the devouring canker-worm, that eats up the heart of married persons, and consumes or mairs the sweet fruit of matrimony : But he that loves his wife, because she is his wife ; and God's pleasure is, that such a person should be loved, whom himself hath united in so near a contract, shall so long continue to love her, whatever she prove in other respects, as she continues to be his wife. If thou love thy wife for that she is fair, well-spoken, courteous, this is well ; but what will become of thy love, if all these fail ? as all may, and the most must fail. Thou lovest thine husband, because he is an handsome man ; hath an active body, is of good wit, and of good behaviour, and useth thee well ; but where shall we find thy love, if these things should alter ? as all earthly things may alter. You see, then, there is no firmness in that love, which is procured only by these motives. But if thou love thy wife or husband, because God hath so bidden thee, the maker of all things hath enjoined it, then shalt thou find thy love constant and perpetual, as God's law continues for ever the same.

Now the knowledge of this property of love, that it must be spiritual, built upon the rock of God's commandment, doth meet with all objections, which many perhaps will make against it in their own cases : for who (saith the husband) can love such a wife ? And what wife can affect such  
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an husband (saith some women ?) I answer you both : that husband that hath learnt to give God's word a sovereignty in his heart, that hath made reason, rectified by Scripture, the guide of his affections, that hath subdued his passions to his judgment, and his judgment to his God, and hath learnt to think it reason for the creature to follow the Creator's will in all things, seem they otherwise never so much against reason : in a word, that man that hath his affections spiritual, can bestow them even on such a wife ; and so shall that woman also, that hath attained such spiritualness of love, find it not impossible to continue her love to such an husband.

And as the ground of the married couple's love, must be spiritual, so must also the working thereof. It must bring forth spiritual effects, seeking the spiritual good of the party loved, by doing all such things with all readiness, whereby that good (the best of all goods) may be attained. Their affections must provoke them, to endeavour after the eternal welfare each of other ; and to labour both, that they may with more ease and assurance attain everlasting salvation : for that love which hath no higher aim than present wealth, peace, and happiness, deserveth no better name than a natural and carnal love. And surely those that love each other because God bids them, will likewise love each other in such a sort as God bids them, even with such a love as will make them careful of each other's souls, as well as of their bodies and estates. Love cannot be separated from an earnest desire of the good of the party loved : and therefore spiritual love must be desirous of the spiritual good. But alas ! how exceedingly faileth the love of most married people ? Yea, of the most that make some shews of goodness ? Many husbands and wives have the bodies of their yoke-fellows so dear, that they cannot endure to think of their disgrace, poverty, sickness, death ; but what becometh of their souls, whether  
they

they be sanctified or unsanctified, in a state of salvation or damnation, these are in the number of those things wherewith they are little moved. But are we bound to marry in the Lord, and shall not our marriage be seasoned with love in the Lord? Thou art kind to thy wife or husband, and he or she is so near to thy soul, that it goes to thine heart to think that any thing should be wanting for their good: it is well. But so might a Pagan do; so may a *Turk* as well as thyself: if the good thou meanest consist only in being healthy and rich, in living at peace and enjoying all the benefits of nature: dost thou desire to make thy yoke-fellow a fellow-heir of *Christ's* kingdom? Dost thou seek to help thy yoke-fellow to heavenly benefits, as well as to these earthly? If so, this is to love spiritually: this love befits a Christian husband and a Christian wife. If otherwise, thy love is to be discommended, not because it is not good so to love, but not good enough for a Christian, that is commanded to have a more holy and heavenly disposition than that, which may be found among those that know not *Christ*. Be not therefore carnal in your loves, walking as men, but spiritual as becometh the sons and daughters of God.

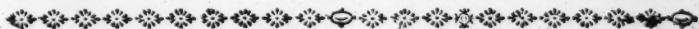
Take notice further, that your loves must be matrimonial as well as spiritual. Spiritualness is a property of that love that is due to all men; we must therefore find out something in the love of yoke-fellows, that may be peculiar to it, and serve to distinguish it from all other loves: for a man must love his parents, his brethren, his friend, yea, and his utter enemies; and love their souls as well as their bodies. But the love of husband and wife to each other, should differ from all other loves in two respects, in regard of which, I call it matrimonial: First, in the quantity of it: Secondly, in the effect. For the first, a man must love his wife above all the creatures in the world; so must the woman her husband. Next to the living

living God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, the wife is to have the highest room in the husband's heart, and he in her's. No neighbour, no kinsman, no friend, no parent, no child should be so near and dear unto the husband, as his wife, nor to her as her husband. Did not *Elkanah* say to *Hannah*, *Am not I better to thee than ten sons?* Surely then he ought to be loved better. Their loves must exceed that of children to parents; and therefore it must know no superior affection but that, that is due to the God of heaven. So much love doth one yoke-fellow owe to the other, as either of them owes unto him or herself in a manner. They are one body, and must love each other, as each other's self; not alone in that common respect, wherein every Christian is bound to love every neighbour as himself; but in this special respect, because of the special nearness that is betwixt them. Man and wife are tied together in the closest of all unions; wherefore their mutual affections must be more large and abundant; which, if it be not, never will it serve to bear thee out in the other duties of matrimony. A man and a woman must do more and suffer more for each other, than for any other in the world: they must bear with more faults each in other, than in any other, and be ready to take more pains each for other, seeing all estates are common betwixt them. Wherefore they must love each other more; for more of every virtue is required to lie in every one, by how much more large effects of it are required. And therefore the mutual affection of *Christ* and his church, is used to express the nature of this nuptial love, that we might know it to be such as should come as near to the largeness of that love as may be possible: but it must also, for effect, be of a binding and tying nature; it must so knit them to each other, that they may receive full satisfaction in each other. The love of the married, must be a single love; causing a man to account his wife the only woman in the world,  
and



and not so much as to yield to the least inclination of having another, and so the wife's towards him. Their persons should be to each other the most precious of all persons; and so love must limit lust, and keep desire within compass. If any man think this impossible, unless every man and woman might find in their own yoke-fellows, as amiable qualities as are to be found in others; I answer, that the point formerly delivered about the spiritualness of affections, will satisfy this objection: for not the good qualities of either, but the good pleasure of God, is to be the ground of their mutual dearness. Good conditions help, indeed, to make this duty more easy; but it is such, as must upon other motives be performed, though good conditions be away. And again I answer, that as a man who seeth more wit and beauty in his neighbour's son or daughter, than his own; yea, whose only child is deformed, crooked and dull, yea, untowardly and rebellious; when his neighbour's child is not only comely and quick-witted, but also gentle, dutiful and obsequious, doth yet love his own child above his neighbour's; even so should it be betwixt husband and wife. A man may lawfully think another woman, a better woman than his own wife; but not love the person of another more virtuous woman, above the person of his own less virtuous; and so likewise may I say of the wife towards the husband. This is matrimonial love; when for degree it is most strong and fervent, withal settling their hearts upon each others persons, above all in the world besides; which we see that few husbands and wives so much as labour to perform. The most are still upbraiding each other, with what matches they might have had; and many could almost prefer any other before their own: these may smile in the faces of each other, but they cannot be said to love each other with a nuptial love. Marriage love admits of none equal in affection, but placeth the yoke-fellow next of all to the soul  
of

of the party in whom it is. Marriage love will not bear the desire of change, but links the hearts of the married so close together, that they are only dear to each other in this respect. O how far are 'most from loving their yoke-fellows as they ought, which yet have thought themselves to have loved each other as well as need to be ! But now you may see, how much the most deceive themselves, and how far short they are of perfection in those duties, wherein they account themselves most perfect. We go forward to the second point, (having shewn what that love is, which we require of the married) to shew them the means of attaining it.



#### C H A P. IV.

*Shewing the means of attaining Love.*

**I**F any man, finding a want of such love, desire to know how he may get and increase it, let him understand, that love will become such (as hath been spoken) if some natural means be used to confirm it, and some spiritual. The natural means is cohabitation : let them have one house, one table, one chamber, one bed: so shall they with most ease, have also one heart and one soul. This was the cause that the Lord ordained in the law, that no *Israelite* should be drawn from home the first year after his marriage, upon occasion of publick services in war ; but should for that space, at least, abide at home with his wife, and so long a time of nearness and familiarity, might make their lives for ever after firm and indissoluble.

Besides this natural means of procuring love, they must take notice of two, more spiritual : the one is, to take special notice of God's gracious providence for good in their match. They must



must often put themselves in mind of that which our Saviour affirmeth, that God hath joined them together for their mutual benefit. We know, that a mean gift is much respected for the giver's sake. If men and women observe the providence of God, in bringing them together, then shall they take each other as love-tokens from God, and so shall be made very dear to each other. He that striveth to love God above all, cannot but love all his blessings for his sake. Wherefore do thou resolve, that God in great goodness (for crosses also, to God's people, come in goodness) hath bestowed this husband or wife upon thee; and thou shalt not chuse, but dearly affect thy yoke-fellow, though some what perhaps sullied with forwardness and ill conditions; for the dearness of the giver, will countervail the defects of the gift. And if thy match be fallen out somewhat cross unto thee, yet know that the Lord did aim at thy good, and will procure it by this cross (causing, that though thy life here be less pleasant, yet thy soul shall have a larger recompence, if thou accept it with patience and thankfulness,) and then the yoke-fellow's distempers may prove unto thee matters of grief, but shall not be able to alienate thine affections. But such as want wisdom, to behold the hand of God coupling them, shall soon cease to love, because their loves are not perfected, and strengthened with the love of God, the only strengthener and perfecter of all virtues.

There is another means of cementing the souls of the married, which will both help to the former: and being joined with it, make it infallibly effectual; and that is to join together constantly in the performances of exercises of piety to God, chiefly betwixt themselves. Let man and wife pray together; let them confer with each other of their heavenly country; let them sing together; so shall their hearts be knit firm to God first. These are the best means of confirmation to their loves.

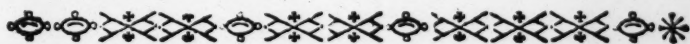
loves. These will nourish the spirit of holiness in them; and that inkindles love, wherever it cometh. These will increase their faith in God, and faith will work by love; in these they shall feel themselves to have been spiritually profitable each to other: and to receive a spiritual benefit, cannot but procure a spiritual affection. Here they shall perceive themselves strangers of one country, servants of one family, children of one parent, and members of one body; and this must needs increase their good-will to each other. Religion will knit the hearts of strangers fast in one. How much more effectual will it be, to fasten together their souls, that enjoy so many and so perpetual bands besides? It is society that most times choaketh the love of the married: they grow weary each of other by long fruition, and then they care not one for another; but if they reason their natural communion, with this spiritual communion, the comfort and power of this, will prevent all satiety, and make them grow in dearneſs each to other. Jars and contentions are the greatest hindrances of their love; but the joining together in these exercises, will cause, that they shall far more seldom jar; and that their sudden jars shall not fester and rankle, to breed hard conceits of each other, which would be the bane of love. Prayer will prevent most discontentments, and compose all; for when they shall appear before God in prayer, instead of blaming each other, only or chiefly (which is the evil humour of pride, that makes these sores to rankle,) they shall each blame themselves, and take the greatest fault upon themselves: which being once done, all contentions will cease, and all quarrels will come to an end. The sight of God, in his ordinances, will quell the pride of their hearts, and make either to see and feel the greatness of his or her own sins; and then the faults of the yoke-fellow will seem little, and the matter of strife will be quite cut off. Yea, if they come before the Lord in prayer,

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they shall be so truly grieved and ashamed for their jarring, that it will make them far more watchful over themselves, and far more able to prevent the like occasions for the time to come. The land-flood of youthful affections will quickly be dried up ; but those lively fountains of spiritual affection, which the joining together in holy exercises shall have digged up for them, will yield a quiet and constant stream of good-will. Those waves, indeed, make most noise, but this spring doth best service. That vehement ardor which sometimes goes before marriage, is more boisterous ; but this moderate and sober affection, that is gotten by serving God together after, is ten times more useful : the former, without the latter, will never make one's life happy ; but this, without that, will abundantly suffice, to a most cheerful living in marriage. Fond he or she may be, that pray not among themselves, but loving they cannot be : wherefore I pray you all, that are, or shall be married, to mark diligently this direction, and not to fail in practising it. What will it profit you to hear good directions from the mouth of God's ministers, if you do not follow them ? Above all other directions, follow this : Call upon the name of God together, peruse his scriptures together, sing praise unto him together, and talk together of his word and works. Lose not the time you spend alone, either in worldly communication, or fault-finding, or in merriment, or sporting each with other ; but be careful to redeem time for those holy duties, which as they are in all respects gainful, so are worth all the time they shall spend, for this very fruit, the growth of your loves, which will follow. And verily there is none that hath any spark of godly wisdom, but shall be forced to confess, if he consult with himself in good earnest, that the true cause of the defects of love in the married, is the seldom coming together before the Lord. Either they love little, or love carnally : And why is this ?  
but

but because they pray but little each with other. But if you would maintain love against all breaches, and keep it from all decays, and make it always ardent, always lively, and always working; if you would make it religious, holy, and godly favouring of piety and the divine nature, then follow this that hath been told you: for if holy duties knit not, and rivet not your hearts together, they will soon be severed. If piety to God do not thus feed your love, it shall be but feeble, or carnal, or both. But then may some man or woman say, alas! how shall I do, that hath such an husband or wife, as neither can nor will join with me in the services of God. To such an one I answer: Pray for that yoke-fellow, that will not pray with thee; intreat God so much more often in behalf of thine husband or wife, by how much they are less able or willing to intreat for themselves; so shall God in goodness turn their hearts to thee, at last thy soul shall be warmed with heavenly love to them; for it is impossible that any should but love that person much and earnestly, for whom they pray much and earnestly. And this also is very sure, though few perhaps will believe it, that to love one's yoke-fellow spiritually and fervently, though one be not so beloved again, is much more content to the soul, and comfort to the life, than to be beloved of them, without so loving.



## C H A P. V.

*Shewing the first effect of Love, viz. Pleasingness.*

**T**HE effects of this nuptial love, are three: Pleasingness, Faithfulness, Helpfulness. The first, which must mix itself with all the rest, I call Pleasingness: It is a disposition of the will, and earnest desire of the heart, to give all content to each other, so far as they may possibly do it,

without sinning against God. The Apostle tells us, that the married man careth for the things of this life, how he may please his wife, and his wife also, how she may please her husband. This he mentioneth not as a matter in either commendable, but praise-worthy in both, and that whereof (in all worldly business, they should be most regardful : for though it be a matter of some difficulty yet it is of exceeding great fruit, and of absolute necessity to the well-being of the family. The Apostle tells us, that he did seek in all things to please all; meaning so far as he could without sin : this duty is therefore a general duty towards all men, and shall it not be much more needful betwixt them that are so nearly united ? Wherefore the husband must do, or leave undone, any thing he can, that he may give satisfaction to the wife ; and so must the wife, for the husband's ease, cross her own desires to satisfy his.

In diet, attire, in choice of company, in all other affairs, they must frame themselves to afford each other such an absolute fulfilling of desires as may be without the transgression of God's law. That which will make this duty possible is resolution and practice ; begin, and the proceeding will prove pleasanter than the beginning : That which will make it easy and comfortable, is the mutual labouring for it on both sides ; for if the wife would apply herself to please her husband, he would find it an easy matter to please her : and if the husband would seek his wife's contentment, she might with much facility content him. Endeavour to please works a willingness to be pleased, and it cannot be difficult to satisfy one that desires as well to give as to take satisfaction.

But some married people may perhaps imagine, that their case admits not of this advice, because they have yoke-fellows so forward and discontented, that nothing will content them. I answer, It is not in any man's power to make a froward person take things well, but it is in their power to do their best to satisfy such a one, and to strive



so much the more painfully, by how much the others disposition is more averse from it. God looks that one should not affect, but endeavour the satisfaction of the yoke-fellow; and if the one be not behind-hand, in giving all just cause of being pleased, the other shall bear the whole blame before God, of the peevishness, which would not suffer him or her to be pleased. It will be objected here, that it will be very hard to continue striving against the stream, and so indeed it will: but good duties must not be omitted, because they are hard. The scholar that hath an hard lesson, must settle more hard to his book, and not cast it away in sullenness, and say, he cannot learn it: so the husband that hath a perverse wife or wife that hath a perverse husband, must give more diligence to give content to such a husband or wife, and not carelessly cast off all, with saying, they be so cross that nothing will please them: verily this is a painful work, but withal it is a possible work. It cannot be that there should remain so great passionateness in the breast of any man or woman, but that they will be kept in better terms, by a yoke-fellow striving to content them, than if no care at all should be used that way. Let therefore the hardness make each more diligent: for if the husband or wife will be unquiet, do what the other yoke-fellow can, how much more if there be no pains taken to make them quiet.

Encourage thyself in this tedious labour, with remembering, that if thou canst not please thy yoke-fellow as thou desirest, thou shalt not fail to please God. Here thou must be put in mind of that worthy counsel, which *Solomon's* grave counsellors gave his young son; *If thou please this people, and speak to their hearts, they will be thy servants for ever.* So say I to thee now, if thou speak to the heart of thine husband or wife, and seek to please him or her, by yielding to them even in things perhaps that are somewhat unreasonable;

this, if any thing, will change their bitterness into gentleness, and their rebelliousness into subjection. Wherefore let all yoke-fellows meditate thus with themselves: I cannot please God if I strive not to please my yoke-fellow. He loves not an houseful of brawls; discord drives him with his blessing out of doors: and there can be no peace where there is no striving by mutual pleasingness to nourish and settle peace. The harder this proverb, the more commendable it is in me, and the better the Lord will take it at my hands, and the more will he reward it at the last. Wherefore I will cross mine own desires, rather than mine husband's, or my wife's, and so carry myself that they may receive contentment in all things, if any thing but sin and wickedness will content them.

Brethren, let thwarting and crossing each other be far from your houses. To cross one's self is a matter of great praise; to cross another, especially one so near, is a point of as great folly as can be; neither can any thing in the world less become married people, and be more reproachful unto them, than to intend the vexing each other; *I will do it, if it be but to anger thee*, is a speech so odious in the mouth of an husband or wife, that scarce any thing can be more. The husband were almost as good tell his wife, that he will be a whore-master, she him that she will be an harlot. Doubtless this thwarting humour, that will do a thing to anger the other, is in the family like the cramp in the body, which pulls and racks the sinews, and makes the body full of torment. This kills all the comfort of society. It is the most contrary to love of any thing: It hinders the going forward of all thirst, and of all duty. Wherefore, let none of you hereafter bear that absurd thought of angering his wife, or her husband, but next to the pleasing God make it your business to please each other. Indeed this caution next to the pleasing of God must needs be put in, or else it is a wicked thing to provoke  
God,



God, by seeking to please a creature. If any thing but the breach of God's law will satisfy thy yoke-fellow, thou must do it, be it never so troublesome, so opposite to thine own desires, and contrary to thine own will ; for every one of us, saith *St. Paul*, must please his neighbour, much more his husband or wife, in that which is good for edification. But if thou canst not fulfil the desires of a man, without breaking of the law of God, then say, it is better to offend a mortal creature, than the immortal God ; for as God must be loved above all, so must he be pleased above all ; and as the yoke-fellow must be loved next to God, so must they also be pleased next to him. Only, my brethren, consider, that this point is delivered unto you amongst the duties that are mutual. Most husbands look for it of their wives, they esteem not themselves bound to do it to their wives ; but look what force obedience hath to tie the wife unto it, the same hath love to tie the husband. And so much be spoken of the first effect of love-pleasingness : There are two more of special use.



#### C H A P. VI.

*Of the faithfulness and helpfulness of the married.*

**H**usband and wife must be to teach other faithful and helpful, these two must ever be joined, therefore we speak of them together. This was one principal thing which the Lord did aim at, in making the woman, and joining her unto her husband : For *it is not good (saith he) for man to be alone, I will make him an help meet for him.* And doubtless the man was to give help as well as to receive it, and to do more good, by how much he was endowed with more strength.

Now this helpful fidelity consisteth in their mutual care of abtaining from, and preventing, so much

much as may be, all such as might hurt or grieve each other; and of doing themselves, & procuring from others to be done, all such things as may make for the comfort and benefit each of other; then are they faithfully helpful to each other, when they will never do themselves, nor suffer, if they can hinder, others to do any thing that may harm each other; and when they are diligent to do themselves, and cause others to do, so far as lies in their power, whatsoever may be good one to another.

This duty must extend to the souls, bodies, names, and estates of each other. First, to the souls, by provoking each other to all piety and holiness of living, as occasion serveth. The husband must not hinder, but further the wife in goodness, nor she him; for the wife also hath liberty to exhort and stir up her husband to well-doing, and to prevail by entreaty and fair means. Their nearness of society gives them many and great occasions of swaying each other either way. They must therefore beware of becoming the devil's instruments to allure each other to sin: for there cannot be a greater mischievousness in the world, than for a man and wife to abuse that power, which they have either in other, as it were, to poison each other; but they must be ready with special diligence, as they have special opportunity to consider one another, and to provoke unto love, and to good works. If the wife perceive the husband slack in matters of religion, or mercy, she must ever be commending these things unto him, and putting him in mind of the excellency of these virtues, and the great reward that God will give to them that practice them, and sweetly drawing him to a more frequent practice of them, always remembering to be mild and gentle in her speeches this way, as one that would allure, and not force. The husband likewise must, with the most familiar and kind speeches that may be, stir up his wife's dulness,

dulness, if he perceive her dull, and mind her of those motives that may encourage & quicken her in all well-doing. O how sweet a society would this of a man and wife be, if they could in this manner be watchful of all opportunities to further each other in godliness.

Again, because they have continual occasion of inward conversing each with other, therefore they may discover in each other divers corruptions and imperfections. Now they must not turn these infirmities into matter of hatred and contempt, but of compassion, and care of procuring each other's reformation. They must not upbraid each other with their sins, nor seek to provoke the corruptions which they find apt to be provoked; but rather give all heed to cut off all such occasions as they find will give advantage to such corruptions of their yoke-fellows, and make them break forth to their hurt: and they must by all good counsel fortify each other's souls against the common enemy. They must both observe the temper and constitution of each other's souls, 'till they perceive what infirmities they are either of them chiefly inclined unto; and having found them, they must diligently abstain from all things that may provoke that evil, and prove occasions of making them overshoot themselves therein: and further, they must apply all means to weaken such corruptions, and to stop their overflowing, that they may not proceed to any extremity, if they have begun to offend in some degree. Their acquaintance with the diseases of each other must not be made a cause of their vilifying each other, by hitting each other in the teeth with such imperfections, rather of helping each other, by flying all such words and actions as would increase and incense them, and taking unto them such gestures and speeches as are fittest to heal and mitigate them. For example, if the husband perceive the wife apt to be angry, and that such and such things will easily put her out of patience,  
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he must pity her weakness, and carefully abstain from such things ; so must she deal with him, and so must they carry themselves to each other, in regard of all other frailties, as well as anger ; yea, if either of them be given to any such high degree of wickedness, as that their own words alone, after all labour to draw them out of it, will not work amendment ; then must they not fear to seek the help of some more wise and able friend, who may perhaps effect that cure, which themselves have failed of : and in case they find little fruit of such endeavours, but that the yoke-fellow will hearken ; yet they must continue to wait and pray, referring the matter to God, the only physician of the soul, who is able in due season to redress all. But those deserve to be condemned as most treacherous each to other, that, for their ease-sake, will permit their yoke-fellows to sleep in sin. Let them swear, let them break the sabbath, many yoke-fellows, for fear of a storm, can keep silence in such cases. This is to betray one another to the devil, and to give each other leave to go to hell without rub. Wouldst thou suffer thine husband to poison himself for fear of enduring his anger, if thou shouldst snatch the poison out of his hand ? Wouldst thou let thy wife cut her own throat, for fear she should chafe and scold, because thou tookest the knife from her ? Doubtless to let them kill each other's souls, and say nothing, for fear of passion, or hard usage, is no less sinful and hurtful perfidiousness, then to give way, for quietness-sake, to their hurting of each other's bodies. And they also are to be blamed as unhelpful, yea, very mischievous, that are ready to spy out the faults each of other with an evil eye, to make them worse, and not better, that look out the faults of each other as enemies do the weak places of a city, to make them weaker ; and as evil surgeons handle a sore, to make it forer. Wo unto such husbands or wives Sorry help is it that they afford to their companions,

companions, and miserable helpers are they ; and God shall one day reckon with them for having done so little good, where he appointed them to do all good. So much for the faithful helpfulness of men and women each to other's souls, in seeking to plant and water virtues, and to pull up the roots of vices in each other's minds.

They must farther practice the same virtues toward the bodies of each other, by shunning all things that may cause diseases or sickness each to other, are by a ready under-going any point or cost (according to their power) to procure diet, physick, attendance, or other necessities, for the keeping or recovering of health. Yea, they must comfort each other in the days of sorrow, that worldly sorrow may not breed death. The wife must be health to her husband in his sickness, and he to her. She must support his weakness with her strength, and he hers : They must most willingly devour all pains, and undergo all cost that is this way needful, for the ease and content each of other. To neglect one so many ways endeared, as an husband or wife, partaker of all estates : This is a notorious hard-heartedness, and should cover their faces with blushing that have offended in it. Sickness and weakness are things of themselves sufficiently tedious ; there needeth not the addition of the husband's or wife's unkindness, to make the burden heavier. This is to add adversity to adversity, and to lade one more, that is already sinking under his load : A most barbarous and cruel unkindness ! When the body fainteth, to make the heart faint also ; when the limbs and joints are weak, to fill the soul with weakness, by grieving at the niggardize and churlishness [grievous things, being practised from one so near, and owing the quite contrary ;] this is murder in a high degree. Wherefore let every husband or wife avoid or mend this fault, and look to their demeanour towards their yoke-fellows, especially in times of weakness, grief  
and



and sickness. When the wife is great, and full of anguish with the labour of breeding and bearing ; when she is in travail, or begins to recover the strength, that pains in travail had diminished, then comfort her with loving speeches ; then cheer her with affable countenances [that is a time when lust should be laid to sleep, and pure good will be most wakeful and working], then see that she want no looking to, no good usage that thou canst help her to. This is to be helpful to her body. So when thine husband is sick and feeble, when he languisheth upon his bed of pain and weakness, when his bones ake, when his eyes refuse sleep, when all things are distasteful to him, then stay him with comfortable speeches, then revive him with diligent attendance ; do all thou canst, and spend all thou canst to the recovering of his strength, or easing of his torment ; let thy love and care be his physic, and thyself his physician ; and let the comfort of thine helpful carriage, content his soul so, that his body may more easily be strengthened : This is to be a good wife to thine husband's body, and to cherish him in sickness, as thy promise binds thee.

In the third place, man and wife must be faithfully helpful to each other's names, and that in a double respect : in a maintaining thereof, both betwixt themselves, and also amongst others. First then, every married couple must uphold in their hearts a good opinion each of other [so far as may possibly stand with truth.] The husband must think well of his wife, she of her husband. Yea, for a man and wife to have somewhat an over-good opinion each of other ; for him to think her not only more beautiful, but also more loving, more dutiful, more submissive, more trusty, then perhaps she is making her virtues carry a greater shew to his eye by looking upon them through the spectacles of love, and for her to account him not alone more proper and well favoured,

favoured, but also more kind, more careful of her good, and more true to her, than he is in reality, (by interpreting things with that largeness of good interpretations, which much love will put upon them) is a thing so far from blame, that it deserveth rather commendation. Certainly then, they should be peremptory to give no credit to ungrounded, unwarranted surmises; they should by no means suffer their heart to grow mistrustful of each other's honesty and fidelity. She must never think that he doth affect other women, unless the matter be more than manifest. She must never imagine that he doth waste or consume their estate, unless the fault be palpably and notoriously plain. He must never persuade himself that she is wanton, or given to strangers; or that she robs him, and purloins from him, unless he can make good these matters, with such clearness of proof, as will not admit of any reasonable defence. All jealousies, all rash, hasty, light, ill-built surmises, must be far from the society of matrimony. For if once their souls be infected with such mistaken conceits each with other, love will go out at the same door that suspicion comes in. He or she that hath a jealous head (an head, I mean, apt to misconceive and suspect) never had, truly, a loving heart. Such might be lustful, they might be fond; but an holy and virtuous, and spiritual affection, they never had, nor can possibly have, if they give way to these evil surmises. And therefore, of all the domestic make-bates that be, and of all those things which are apt to set quarrels betwixt the married couple, nothing in the world is more pestilently effectual to these bad effects, than jealousy. Having leavened the heart, it makes the speeches sharp and tart, the countenance sour, and the whole behaviour, keen and untasteful. No good words, no good looks, no good gestures, no good actions can proceed out of a jealous man or woman's heart. Jealousy will make a man suck mischievous things out of

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his own fingers ends, and take on as much, and vex himself, and blame his yoke-fellow as much, where no fault hath deserved it, as if there were a fault. This evil weed must not be suffered to grow up in the garden of matrimony; for if it do, no good herb will prosper by it; it will over-run all that is commendable, and suffer no praiseworthy thing to flourish. And therefore let all that have knit themselves together with this covenant, loath and detest any motion or fancy that may arise within them of any unchastity, any unfaithfulness, any evil meaning of their yoke-fellows; let their hearts (I say) rise against these motions; and let them disdain to give the least credit unto them, unless that the proofs be more than manifest. Away with this make-bate jealousy, this quarreller suspicion, this breeder of brawls, this mother and nurse of contention, this secret underminer of love, of good husbandry and good housewifery, and all things that should be profitable to an household. Away with it (I say) out of thine heart, chase it far off from thy breast, from thine house. It is better to receive ten wrongs without suspecting, than to suspect one without having received it. Aptness to suspect another, grows upon the evil root of a bad nature, whereby one is apt to offend himself. Wherefore, as thou wouldest stand for the good name of thy yoke-fellow, against the tongue of a slanderer, so stand for it against the slanderous dreams of thine own heart, and take heed of believing thine own fancies, or others reports, without most pregnant proofs. And if any wicked person, maker of division, betwixt the head and body, will suffer his lips to be so ill employed, as to become *Satan's* bellows to blow these coals betwixt you, by telling thee this and that: rebuke such a person, reject his words with detestation, fly his society as a toad, and let not thine ears and heart be defiled, with giving gentle audience to a whisperer & talebearer. In one word, wouldest thou love, or  
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loved ? Wouldst thou live otherwise in marriage, than as in a prison or a dungeon ? Wouldst thou give or have any quiet or content ? Strengthen thine heart in a firm and unalterable, and unconquerable good conceit of thy yoke-fellow, and rather be any thing than jealous. And thus must the married preserve their credit at home, in the breast of each other.

They must be tender also of their good reputations abroad, and beware of casting mire in the faces of each other. This mutual saving the credits each of other, requireth two things : First, that they labour to conceal the weaknesses each of other, from all others, so much as is possible. The husband must do his best endeavour, that none may know of his wife's faults, but God and himself ; neither must he be willing to lay them open any where, but to the ear of heaven, where he may crave pardon of them ; and the woman must do her best, to keep her husband's evils from the knowledge of all the world. All blabbing, and loud accusing, must be far removed from them, that have so near interest each unto other. They must account their credits, as well as their bodies, to be in a manner all one. The publishing of each other's sins and imperfections, is a monstrous treachery, and a thing than which nothing can worse become them, in the judgment of the wife. To backbite an enemy is a sin ; how much more to backbite one's own yoke-fellow ? Whose faults can one cover, if not his wife's ; that is to say, his own ? Or who can be free from reproach, if one so near him as his wife, seek to deface his good name ? It is almost impossible, but that a man and wife shall sooner or later discover their weakness each to other ; and for them to be playing the tell-tales each against other, what soul doth not loath to think of it ? Unwise man or woman, will thy husband or wife be the better for thy lavish reporting of their faults ? Will thy tatling of their vices mend them ?

If not, why dost thou disgrace thyself, in seeking to disgrace thy yoke-fellow? Why dost thou publish thine own untrustiness, uncharitableness, indiscretion, in publishing the frailties of thine husband and wife, and make all wise men take thee for a passionate, open-mouthed backbiter, by telling abroad, what thou findest amiss at home? Wherefore, if any have given leave to themselves, to be so sinfully talkative heretofore, now let very shame cause them to lay their hands upon their mouths, that they may not more and more incur the name of fools, by making their tongues to spread abroad folly.

I deny not but that the regard of the yoke-fellow's soul, may make either of them seek a counsellor and admonisher for the other: but it is one thing to acquaint with the fault of one's husband or wife, some one friend (and more than one in this case would not easily be trusted) and that in secret; another thing to throw it open before company. Such a friend will so seek to heal the soul, as that he may not wound the credit; and will tender as well the name as the conscience of his friend: but the greater number seek only to deface the credit, without regarding the recovery of the soul; so the former revealing cannot hurt at all, the latter can do no good at all. Wherefore to utter to one privately for his soul's health sake, the sin or sins of the yoke-fellow, may proceed from love, because it tendeth to good; but to ease one's stomach against him or her, by pouring forth their faults, is as rottenness in the bones. Know therefore, and practice this duty, O husbands and wives; spit not in each other's face, disclose not each other's faults, but conceal, hide, bury, and cover them so much, as truth and equity will bear.

And besides this, you yoke-fellows must for each other's credit and comfort, keep the secrets of each other faithfully. There may fall out an occasion



sion for a man to acquaint his wife with some such thing, as it much concerneth him to have kept close from others ; and the woman may likewise have cause of thus opening herself to her husband. In such cases, they must use all secrecy. But if in such cases they prove unseasonably open, and the wife find that her husband hath revealed that, which she would have had reserved to his own only knowledge ; or he find that his wife hath vented that to another, which he desired should dwell with herself alone ; this will breed betwixt them such a jar, such an estrangement, such a distrust each of other, as it will not be an easy labour to remove. For how should that person be trusted with any thing, who cannot keep counsel ? Wherefore let husbands and wives always mind this : if he lay up any thing in her breast, let him find it safe there, as in a chest which cannot be opened with any pick-lock. If she commit a thing to his safe keeping, let it be safe imprisoned in his bosom ; otherwise, no man can chuse but be strange towards such an one, whom experience hath convinced of blabbing. And it is a most infallible truth, that there is no comfortable living in marriage, where the practice of trustiness and concealment is away. So you have heard what care the married people must have of each other's good name.

The last part of faithfulness to each other, is that which concerneth their goods or estates, wherein they are bound to be mutually helpful by all good means. And to this purpose it is requisite, first, that they practise a community in their estates : next, that they practise good husbandry. For the first : betwixt man and wife all things ought to be common, goods as well as persons ; for if they may not make a division in the greater, shall it not be a gross absurdity to make it in the lesser ? They must have one house, and one purse ; they are but one, and their estate must be but one. I confess that God hath made

him the head and chief disposer ; but without all question she that hath a part in himself, cannot want right unto that which is for honest purposes. How can any man, with a good conscience, forget that part of his public and solemn covenant, wherein he endowed her with all his worldly goods ?

And having thus united their estates, let them secondly play the good husband, and the good house-wife therein. In husband and wife, the next thing to godliness and honesty, is good husbandry and good housewifery ; and this good husbandry standeth in three things, labour, thrift, forecast. Painfulness in getting, discretion in saving, provident in foreseeing ; these three make up good husbandry ; and if any of these be wanting, so much is wanting from the perfection of it, and so much shall be wanting from their comfort and prosperity. First then, they must both employ themselves in such honest courses of getting and maintaining themselves, as God shall call them to. Neither must he live like a drone, and make a drudge of her ; neither must she give herself to ease, and cast all the labour upon him ; but both must apply themselves to their vocations painfully, and both be ready to dispatch those businesses, for which themselves and families must fare the better. He without doors, she within ; he in such things as besit his sex, she in those that become her's, must be content to unite their pains for their profit, and to undergo the labour of getting their living in the sweat of their brows, and of eating the labour of their hands ; and what they have painfully gotten, they must likewise thriftily save from needless expences. They must not pinch from mercy and justice, but withhold from prodigality and lavishness. A sweet tooth, and a fine back, are pick-purses ; they must banish these out of their houses. He must not lavish it out abroad, neither must she lay it out at home ; neither must they both join in needless expences,  
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but rather in practising those virtues, by which both shall find comfort in their estates, and praise with God. Thirdly, they must both be provident, laying their heads together, to consider what good things are requisite for their estates, that they may procure them; and what hurtful things would come upon them, that they may prevent the same. Forecast is as good as labour: and the work of the head, no less available than the work of the hands. Two eyes see more than one, and two hands dispatch more business than one; she is the helper, and he must not refuse her help in this case, for it seldom falleth out, but that a man too reserved from his wife, doth plunge himself and her into divers unnecessary crosses. Thus doing, they shall procure sufficiency to their estates, and their hands, by God's blessing, shall find abundance: but the idle person walketh upon a thorn-hedge that will surely prick his feet. The careless person shall put his foot into a snare that will entangle him, and God himself will cast upon them vexation and sorrow. But one caution must be given in this matter; namely, That they be both moderate in these their worldly affairs; for if they fall to carking and pinching, and desiring riches, heaven and earth cannot keep a family diseased with this dropsy, from many troublesome and deadly pangs.



## C H A P. VII.

*Shewing the duties of the married to their families.*

AND so much of those duties which man and wife jointly owe to each other. There follow some that they must practise in regard of their families. For a man and a woman that before  
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were members of another family, therefore join together that they may become the roots of a new family, and begetting children and training them up, together with servants, according to their place, may provide plants for the church, God's own vineyard. Wherefore they have not thoroughly discharged their duties, by the performance of all these things to each other, unless they carefully regard their household also. Herein indeed the husband must be acknowledged for the head; but the wife is to take the next place, and, as subordinate to her husband, must become an helper and a furtherer. The things themselves that I shall name belong to them, as governors of an house, in relation to children and servants: but the joining together therein is that which must be pressed as a part of their marriage duty.

Now this their family they must both maintain and govern, keep and guide. First, they must join in making provision of all necessities for their children and servants. He is worse than an infidel, saith the apostle, that provideth not for his own, especially for them of his family. They must not carry themselves in such sort, as infidels would disdain to do: but this duty is co-incident with that I spake of before, faithfulness in their estates; for by joining their hands and heads in labour, thrift, and providence, they shall cause that no good thing be wanting to their children or servants. And verily it is a great commendation to the governors, when their carefulness doth save all about them from want. Herein they imitate the living God, the father of this great family, the world, who fills every creature with good things fit for it. Wherefore let them practise those directions which were before set down, and so do two good things at once, even profit themselves, and all that pertain to them.

But a family must be governed as well as maintained, and how should it be governed but by them? Wherefore they must also be good rulers  
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at home, and join in guiding their people under God. The man must be taken for God's immediate officer in the house, and as it were the king in the family; the woman must account herself his deputy, an officer substituted to him, not as equal, but as subordinate; and in this order they must govern: he, by the authority derived unto him from God immediately, she, by authority derived to her from her husband.

Now this their government looketh to matters of God, and matters of the world. Their first care must be, that the living God be truly worshipped in their houses, and that the knowledge and fear of him be planted in the hearts of their children and servants. To this end they must read the scriptures, and call upon the name of God amongst them, and catechize them in the principles of true religion, that none under their roof may be ignorant of the fundamental truths of godliness. To this end also they must look, that the sabbath of the Lord be sanctified by their people, and must carefully and constantly bring them to the publick assemblies, and examine them afterwards of their profiting thereby. So the main care of all good and christian governors should be, that religion may flourish in their houses. Why hath God given the name of churches to christian families but because of those holy services done publickly in the family? Whereby they are all sanctified, and become even houses of God to dwell in. If this care be wanting, they shall also want God's blessing on all other their cares; yea, their family shall be but a nursery for hell, their children and servants remaining still children and servants of the devil, because they neglect those means by which they should be made the children and servants of God. Were it not better, in regard of themselves, to have kept no family, than such a family, whereof the members are brought up to nothing but damnation? Wherefore nothing in scripture is more evidently required than  
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that fathers bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and that they continually whet the law of God upon them, and be talking of it to them, whilst they sit in their houses. And lest we should think that this care appertained to the parent alone, and not unto the master also. *Abraham* is commended, for that he would command his servants to fear the Lord, that it might go well with him and them both. And *Joshua* undertaketh for himself and family, that they will serve God. And when God enjoineth the master to look to his whole family that they break not the sabbath, must not the negative here, as well as in other commandments, include the affirmative? And how shall he look that they sanctify God's sabbath, if he take no pains to bring them to the knowledge of God and of his service? Wherefore let man and wife be principally helpful to each other in this business. When the husband is present, let him read and pray with his family, and teach them the fear of the Lord. In his absence let the wife do these duties, or at least take care to see them done; and let them both provide convenient time and leisure for the same, and each quicken the slackness of other, if either begin to grow slack. Seeing they desire to be called God's servants, let them deserve that name, and be careful to do him service in their little commonwealth. How can they look for prosperous success in any thing, if the homage due unto the chief Lord be neglected? Why should he be accounted worse than an infidel, who provideth not food and cloathing for his family; and he that lets their souls go naked for want of that which is food and cloathing both unto them, I mean instruction in the things that pertain to life and godliness, deserve a less disgraceful name? Here therefore let man and wife be ever ready to stir up each other out of that sloth and negligence which will be ever ready to seize upon them. But how seldom this is done, lamentable experience

ence can teach us. Sometimes the husband would have God served in the family, and then the wife hangs off, and counts it loss of time. Sometimes again the wife would fain have the worship of God find place under their roof, and he, like a prophane beast, calls it preciseness, and will not have an hour spent so idly. Sometimes both conspire in negligence and omission: but how seldom do their desires and endeavours meet in this most needful point? How seldom do they provoke and encourage each other in so profitable works?

Now therefore, I say again, let all husbands and wives that fear God be of one mind in the Lord, and let them not fail in using all good means to plant and water piety in their people's hearts, by establishing the exercises of religion in their houses: and thus for the matters of God must they govern well.

Now for the matters of the world also, they must oversee the ways of their families. Of this oversight these are the parts: First, they must appoint their inferiors such works and services, as are fit for them to do, and follow them, and look after them, that they may perform it accordingly: for had not the Lord seen, that inferiors would stand in need of such following, he would never have made this difference in the family. If servants and children would of themselves be painful in their business, what need the master or dame to do any thing in the house? But God saw well, that the best servants in the world would need help this way, and therefore ordained governors in a family, even two governors; one chief the other subordinate, that the absence of one might be supplied with the presence of another.

Secondly, They must mark the carriage of their inferiors, and take notice what disorders are ready sometimes to creep in secretly, sometimes violently to break in; that such evils may be either prevented or resisted speedily. Idleness, tattling,  
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discord, and many other imperfections, are apt to steal upon the best servants and children in the world, which the Lord well knowing, made rulers in the house, to keep all in good order. And if it seem unto us, as it is, a cumbersome thing thus to rule and guide an household, we must remember, that God did not make man to live at ease, and take his pleasure, but to do service. And though this care be troublesome, yet the mischiefs that will follow upon the want of it, are much more troublesome: for if the eyes of the master and mistress stand not open to see and oppose the faults of those that are under them, they will grow bold and licentious, and full of wickedness, be the governors otherwise never so godly; but by their mutual care, this duty may be easy to both, and much peace follow in the house.

Lastly, They must join in admonishing, encouraging, reproving, and if need be, correcting their inferiors: both must discountenance those that carry themselves ill, and both must commend them for good behaviour, that so they may both maintain each other's authority to the full. If one think fit, by some little kindness to encourage any in the family, the other must not grudge; if the one will reprove, the other must not defend; if he will correct the children, she must not grow angry and save them; neither must he save them out of her hands, when she seeth cause to give chastisement. Suppose that either of them exceed this way, correcting either without cause, or above measure, the other must not make a brawl of it before the face of the inferiors; but they must quietly debate the matter each with other alone, and keep their disagreements in this kind from appearing in the family; for if he do, and she undo, or if she chide, and he defend, (besides the heart-burnings which will grow betwixt themselves) they will also so lessen each other's power in the family, that both at last shall grow into contempt.

contempt. They must therefore so join hands in these works, that their dissention may not blast the fruit of all their endeavours. It is harmful to nourish as it were a domestic faction in this little commonwealth. What one likes or dislikes, let the other (at least by silence for the present) seem also to like or dislike, and let them never disagree, in admonishing, or correcting, or commending; so shall their discreet conduct preserve their authority among their people, encrease their love each to other, and procure amendment in their inferiors. And so much be spoken of the joint duties of husband and wife, both towards themselves and toward their families, both for maintenance and for government. We come now to speak of such duties as are peculiar to either of them, wherein we will first inform the husband, and afterwards the wife.



## C H A P. VIII.

### *Of a Man's keeping his Authority.*

**T**HE husband's special duties are referred to two heads; he must govern his wife, and maintain her; and as our Lord Jesus is to his church, so must he be to his wife, an head and saviour. As for government, two things also are required of him; one, that he keep his authority; the other, that he use it. First then, every man is bound to maintain himself in that place in which his maker hath set him, and to hold fast that reverence and precedency which both God and nature have assigned him. Nature hath framed the lineaments of his body to superiority, and set the print of government in his very face, which is more stern, and less delicate than the woman's;

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he must not suffer this order of nature to be inverted. The Lord, in his word, hath intitled him the head; wherefore he must not stand lower than the shoulders; if he do, doubtless, it makes a great deformity in the family. And without question it is a sin for a man to come lower than God hath set him. It is not humility, but baseness, to be ruled by her, whom he should rule. No general would thank a captain, for surrendering his place to some common soldier, nor will God an husband, for suffering his wife to bear the sway. It is dishonourable to the prince, if subordinate officers yield the honour of their places to meaner subjects; and the contempt redounds upon God, which a man is willing to take upon himself, by making his wife his master. God's authority invested in his person, he must not permit to be trodden down and despised: For this St. Paul hath given us a rule, saying, *Let every man abide in the place wherein he is called.* It must be understood as well of the place for order and government, as for condition of life. But here perhaps some weak-spirited man may say, The thing you speak is reasonable, if a man could do it: But experience shews; it is sooner said than done; for himself, he hath met with such a virago, that will be governor, or will over-turn all; and against such a froward and sturdy-spirited dame who can preserve his authority? To such objector I answer, That most men cast the blame, of losing their authority, upon their wives, when in truth it is wholly due unto themselves; for it is not extorted from them by the wife's violence, but cast away by their own indiscretion. It is not indeed in any man's power, to restrain a violent woman from assailing his authority, but it is from winning it. Whether she shall break forth into contempt, he cannot chuse; but whether he will prostitute himself unto contempt, that he may and must chuse. Many a city is fiercely assaulted, and not taken. Many a woman strives to break  
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the yoke, but is not able. So long as the husband's behaviour is such, that the wife's soul (after she hath recovered herself out of the drunkenness of passion) is forced to blame her own rebelliousness, and in her conscience to acknowledge him worthy the better place : so long hath he duly preserved his authority against all her rude and disloyal resistance. Know ye therefore all ye husbands, that the way to maintain authority, is not to use violence, but skill. Not by main force must an husband hold his own against his wife's undutifulness, but by more mild, gentle, and wise proceeding. We wish not any man to use big looks, great words, and a fierce behaviour, but we advise you to a more easy and certain course: First, Let the husband endeavour to gain all commendable virtues, and to exceed his wife as much in goodness as he doth in place. Let his wife see in him such humility, such godliness, wisdom, as may cause her heart to confess, that there is in him something that deserveth to be stooped to : Let him walk uprightly, christianly, soberly, religiously, in his family, and give a good example to all in the household ; then shall the wife willingly give him the better place, when she cannot but see him to be the better person. No inferior can chuse but in his soul stoop to that superior in whom grace and God's image doth appear according to his place. A virtuous man shall be regarded in the conscience of the worst woman, yea, in the behaviour also of any that is not monstrous. It is no burden to any to yield themselves to such a one as is apparently better than themselves. It is true, that (in a mad fit) the wife of the best husband may fling forth, and be undutiful ; but when she is returned to herself, she shall condemn herself, and justify him ; and so, instead of losing his authority, he recovers his own with advantage. Be you therefore all assured, that you shall find virtuous carriage the best preservatives of esteem. Take pains then to make thyself good, and that

is the most compendous way to make thyself revered.

But as in general, we prescribe a good conversation for the best preserver of a man's authority in the family, so especially must all husbands be counselled to shun evils that make every man to seem vile in the eyes of those that see him so disordered.

The first of these is bitterness, as the Apostle Paul terms it, in giving all husbands warning of it, saying, *Be not bitter to your wives.* Sharp, tart carriage, consisting of reviling, striking, and other furious words and gestures, he fitly calleth bitterness, because it is as offensive to the mind as gall and wormwood to the palate. This bitterness shews folly, and works hatred, and therefore must needs be a great underminer of authority. They will hate whom they fear, saith one well of a tyrant. A tyrannical husband, as well as a tyrannical prince, shall thrust himself besides his place. Such demeanor bewrayeth great impotency of affection, and want of wildom, whence will ensue want of reverence.

Secondly, He that would retain the pre-eminence of his place, must avoid unthriftiness (another great enemy to reverence.) Drunkenness, gaming, ill company, are the three parts, as I may call them, of unthriftiness; the first drowneth wit, the second consumeth wealth, the third eats out the heart of all good conditions: And he that hath neither wit in his head, money in his purse, nor good qualities in his person, how can he be but loathed and despised. Wherefore away with drinking, gaming, and following ill companions, if thou would not be cast at once out of the hearts of all thy family, and all thy neighbours, and of thy wife also, both for love and reverence.

Thirdly, Lightness must be avoided by husbands; foolish, childish, unstay'd tricks, that have no impression of gravity or discretion upon them,

them, but favour of a kind of boyishness. Such contemptible things must needs expose a man to contempt. If the husband puts a fool's coat upon his back, can he blame his wife though she laughs at him? The bitter man is like a frantic head, very troublesome; the unthrifty man, as a scald head, very fulsome; the light man, the jester, like a giddy head, very ridiculous. Such men will soon displace themselves, tho' no man strive to undermine them. But let every godly man cast from him all these base evils, and strive for holiness and gravity of conversation, that he may be indeed a governor, and that his superiority (supported by such pillars) may stand upright and unshaken.

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## CHAP. IX.

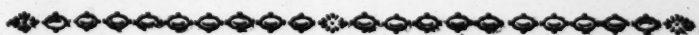
### *Of the parts and ends of a Man's Authority.*

**B**UT authority must be exercised as well as preserved; yea, verily it cannot be kept, unless it be used, being like a sword, that will rust if it lie still in the scabbard without using. Now that men may understand how to use this precious thing (for authority is one of the richest jewels in the world, it is a model of God's sovereignty, and the very life and soul of all societies) it is necessary for us to direct them herein, by standing upon three points: First, to shew the parts of authority; secondly, the end; and thirdly, the manner of using it. Of the parts of authority first. I mean by authority, a power of exercising government over another; and this hath two parts, to guide and to recompence, to direct and

to requite. Direction consists in the enjoining lawful things to be done, and in the forbidding of things at least indifferent. Recompence is also double, of good and obedient carriage, by commendation and rewards ; of evil and disobedient, by reproofs and punishments. These are the parts of government, I mean those things which a governor by virtue of his place both may and must take upon him to do, and which are so appropriated to the place of a governor, that none other may adventure to do them all, unless he will exceed his vocation, sin against God, and wrong the person over whom he usurpeth. Now, concerning all these, commanding, forbidding, commending, rewarding, reproofing, it is of all hands granted, that it is lawful for an husband to exercise them all upon his wife ; yea, and for some kind of punishment also, by withdrawing from her the plentiful demonstrations of kindness, and fruits of his liberty, and by abridging her of her liberty, and the enjoyment of many things delightful, an husband may inflict the same.

We must next shew the end, whereto he must direct all, and each of these parts, and that is the good of his wife, the increase of virtue in her, and reformation of vice ; the making her better, and helping her to comfort here, and salvation hereafter. So all governors have their power from God, rather for the benefit of them whom they govern, than for their own ease, pleasure, profit. In like sort the husband has his domestic sovereignty, that God, the governor of all, may receive more glory by the comfortable fruit of his own ordinance to them that yield unto it. The aiming at this end, would be as great a furtherance as any could be, to the well-being of a family, and would keep out almost all the mischiefs wherewith now divers households are little less than rent in pieces ; for most men never dream of this end, but serve themselves wholly in governing, and regard not their wives at all. The  
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not knowing why they govern, makes husbands govern amiss, and so become burdens to themselves and their wives : He that shoots at a wrong mark, cannot but shoot awry ; and he must needs take a wrong way, that mistakes the town to which he should travel. Wherefore an husband should often demand of himself, saying, Why am I the chief in this household ? and why lieth the government on my shoulders ? Is it that I should live at more ease than any in the family ? that I should fulfil mine own wishes, and have what I would ; and that every one should care for me, and I for none ? No ; for the head in the body was not created for its own sake ; and I would count him an evil magistrate and minister, that should bewray such a conceit in his place. But here I am the chief, that all may fare the better for me ; that by my using more wisdom, and taking more pains, and shewing more virtues than any of the family, all the family may live more orderly and comfortably (and especially my wife) may enjoy more quiet, and get more grace than could be attained, if I were away. The fruit of my ruling my wife, must be her comfort and happiness ; neither must I account any happiness to myself, wherein she hath not her portion : so by often informing himself to what purpose he ruleth, he shall exceedingly help himself to rule well.



## C H A P. X.

### *Of Justice in the Husband's Government.*

**B**UT to shoot at the mark, is not much praiseworthy, unless a man hit it ; so for a man to intend his wife's good, unless he effect it also, is  
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not much to to his commendation. Now the only way of attaining the end of any business, is to do it in a right manner. Wherefore we will direct husbands how they shall rule, so as to weaken every corruption, and strengthen every virtue in their wives, and to make their lives ten times more holy and happy than else they could be, and to give them just cause (which is the most desirable thing that can be in government) of hearty praising the name of God for their meeting together in marriage. At least, if the husband follow these directions, he shall be blameless in missing his end, because he doth not miss it through his own default, but by means of something that lies not in his power to prevent. To the point, then: A man in governing his wife, must govern himself, according to the rules of the three principal virtues which are of most use, as in all places of government; so likewise in this domestic kingdom: for so it is, and so it may most properly be called. These virtues are justice, wisdom, mildness; with the practice of which, he must temper the exercise of his authority, and then shall he bring glory to God, and good to his wife and to himself in governing. Justice is the life and soul of government, without which it is no better than a dead carcase. Wisdom is the eye of government, without which, it is like a strong soldier, stark blind. Mildness is the health and good constitution of government, without which, it is like a big body full of diseases; unjust government is tyranny; unwise government is folly; unmild government is cruelty; but just, wise, and mild government, is government indeed, causing the husband to be, as it were, God in the family, a resemblance of the sovereignty, and goodness of him that instituted matrimony. Let us begin with justice, the soul of government; the absence whereof doth make it degenerate into odious tyranny.

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By justice, I mean that which is commonly called distributive justice, which consists in fitting the usage of persons under authority, both to the superiors limits, and to the inferiors deservings. This must be practised both in directing and recompencing : For the first, he must learn so to command, not as the chief and absolute commander, but as one who himself standeth under a superior power, to which he doth more owe subjection, than his wife to him. Wherefore he must in no sort abuse his authority, to force his wife to things that are sinful. What God commandeth, he must not forbid ; what God forbiddeth, he must not command. What the wife cannot either perform, or omit, without sinning against God and her own soul (because either the Lord himself, or some superior powers, have interposed their authority,) that it is extreme injustice for the husband to require or to prohibit. This is to thrust her into the fire of Hell, so much as in him lieth ; out of which, if she be not drawn by a strong hand, she must be damned for yielding, he for enjoining. Wherefore in such absurd and sinful commands, he shall violate the laws of wisdom and justice both at once, and shew himself in the same action both a fool towards her, and a rebel against God. For it is the highest degree, both of unrighteousness and of folly, for the subordinate governor to take upon him above the sovereign. Let no husband, therefore, forget, that the Lord in heaven, and the public magistrate on earth, are above both him and his wife, and that they both ought equally to be subject to these ; and therefore, let him never set his private authority against these authorities that are stronger than his, nor make his wife undutiful to either of these, by a false claim of duty to himself. It is a tyranny and usurpation for any governor to be ignorant of, or to transgress the bounds of his own place : for a man to command his wife to lie for his advantage ; to break the sabbath for his gain ;

to participate in his fraud, or the like ; nothing is more abhorrent from equity.

Where princes have commanded their subjects to worship images, or commit other iniquities, they have brought upon themselves the odious name of tyrants ; and the not yielding to their sinful commandments, have been an high praise unto their subjects. Doubtless the husband may, with less shew of reason, challenge power to appoint such things ; and so to forbid his wife to pray unto God, to come to the word and sacraments, to shew mercy to the distressed with discretion : This is against right in the highest degree. When *Darius* commanded, that no man should invoke the name of God for thirty days, the prophet *Daniel* would not condescend to such a command ; why then should a wife hearken to her husband in the like case, to the apparent transgressing of her maker's law ? Nay, why should any man be so exorbitant in his ruling, as to call for obedience in such things ? See then, all ye husbands, that your words to your wives hold agreement with the laws of God, else you govern not, but tyrannize ; and to disobey you, is the best obedience ; or rather to withdraw one's self from following your ill-ordered directions, is not to deny subjection to your place, power and persons, but to your sins, lusts, and corruptions, yea, to the devil himself who rules in you, and abuseth your tongues as his instruments in such a case. If *Adam* were guilty for hearkening to the voice of his wife, contrary to God's voice, doubtless she should have been punished also, for hearkening to his voice against God's.

But this rule of justice must be extended yet a little further ; not alone in things that are unlawful, but also in things that to the wife's erring conscience seem unlawful, must the husband forbear the urging his authority. What she doth account a sin, that the husband ought not to force her to. The conscience is God's immediate officer,

ficer, and commanding by virtue of its commission (the will of God revealed in scripture) though it err in construction of that commission, must yet be obeyed, and over-weigh the authority of all other commanders, till with due reasons, manifesting such mistaking, it be better informed, and duly satisfied. For whosoever accustometh to go against conscience in things, that though they be not, yet are judged to be sins, will at length so blot out all conscience, as to go against it in things that are really faults. Who so will make bold with an erroneous conscience, shall procure to himself either a dead and seared, or else a perplexed conscience. So a man in offering violence to his wife's conscience, shall quickly drive her either to utter carelessness, or utter uncomfortableness; for in crossing the sentence of her own soul, either she shall put it quite to silence, or make it so terribly clamorous, that the noise of terrors shall always sound in her ears, and her life shall be unto her as tedious, as if she were upon the rack, through the fierce and inward accusations of her own accuser and judge. Wherefore, in cases of this nature, when a woman, through weakness of judgment, reputeth a thing indifferent to be sinful, the husband must not, by vehemence, compel his wife's practice against her conscience, but with pity and gentleness seek to free her soul from the entanglement of such error, still remembering, that conscience is the supreme commander of man, next under God, and hath the most sovereign authority over men's actions. The truth is yet, that if she pretend conscience, when it is but wilfulness, he must a while wait for the healing of this stiffness: but if fair persuasions will not reclaim her, he must at length use the authority bestowed upon him by God, and expressly enjoin her to change her obstinacy into subjection. You will, perhaps, demand, how a man should know whether his wife be wilful or scrupulous? For first, Scruple  
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of conscience is grounded upon the word of God, and taketh occasion of doubting from some text of scripture, that carrieth at least an appearance of condemning that, whereof it makes question. But obstinacy is ever up with conscience.

Conscience, when yet it is backed with no part of God's word, that can in any probability be thought to induce to a fear of doing or omitting, what it refuseth to do or omit. Where wilful error, without conscience, hinders yielding, no heed must be taken of it: when an erroneous conscience hindreth, it must be tenderly handled. Therefore if a woman can produce some word of God (that maketh her doubt of the lawfulness of a thing) though it be perhaps misinterpreted by her, she must be resolved, not compelled: but if she stand upon terms of conscience, without God's word, without God's word she may be compelled, because there is no other way of resolving her; for not every scruple of heart doth make a thing sin to a man in whom it is, but that alone which is grounded upon scriptures; in which case, conscience (though misinformed) retains its own authority; and so to enforce a woman against it, were to force her to sin.

Again, it may be thought the mistaking of conscience, when things indifferent are deemed either sinful or needful; and in such things, it is a point of justice to tender a weak conscience: but if one will seem to make a conscience of doing that, and so refuse to do it, which God hath commanded plainly; this is sure wilfulness in error, not infirmity of conscience; and therefore here the wife is not to be borne with; but after good means used to discover her error, if she persist in wilfulness, he may justly be so much the more urgent, by how much she is more backward. Be not so unrighteous towards thy wife, as to urge her either to displease God or her conscience in a thing indifferent, leaning on the word of God: for none is Lord of conscience, but only God, the Lord  
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of heaven and earth. And thus much for justice in the matter of directing.

It must be exercised also in requiting either the bad or good carriage of the wife. Bad behaviour may be requited with reproofs and correction (as we said above) only so that justice be observed herein. And to this end two rules must be given, one in regard of the thing for which, another in regard of the measure wherein, one reproveth or correcteth: First, No reproof or correction must be given without a fault; where no sin hath gone before to deserve such hardness, it cannot without much injustice be practised against her. No good surgeon will lay a plaister upon a sound place, that were always a needless labour, most times dangerous, for some medicines will make the sound flesh sore; so neither must an husband find fault where no fault is, for fear of making a fault where none else would be.

Here we must also observe, that a fault reformed must go in the account of no fault; and therefore a woman must never be upbraided with it: for an upbraiding is a reproof, and a sin amended, is after a sort annihilated. Indeed former faults may justly be alledged, to aggravate the same offence reiterated: but if the wife do not repeat her sin in committing, the husband shall deal exceeding unjustly, if he repeat it in reproving. Wherefore chafe not against thy wife for no fault, reprove not her when she dishonours not God, neither let passion ever make thee repeat those things which she hath reformed; so shall thy ways be conformable to justice in this point, of reproving or punishing, as to the cause of doing. But the measure of doing is in every thing almost of as needful observation as the cause; for justice is to proportion the reproof or punishment to the fault.

But to come a little nearer to the point: The husband must know, that for punishing his wife, he must come exceeding slowly to it, and be very  
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seldom in it, never proceeding unto it till compelled, because other means have been frustrated. For a man to estrange his countenance and behaviour towards his wife, to withdraw the testimonies of his love, to cease to trust her, or to speak familiarly and cheerfully to her ; these are such things as deserve the name of chastisements. The wife that hath not forgotten all good affection to her husband, cannot but smart and bleed under these stripes (as I may call them). They are therefore to be of rare use, and not applied at all, till the grossness of much misdemeanour shall compel. For all things of this kind, whether reproofs or chastisements, they must still be more or less sharp, as the fault is greater or lesser, being suitable not to the passion, or loss, or hurt of the reprover, but to the sin or offence of the reprov'd.

Another part of justice in recompencing, is, that the good deeds go not unrecompenced ; rewards and commendations must be given, to increase the good things that are in the wife, as well as reproofs to diminish the evil. *Solomon* saith, that the husband of the good wife shall praise her : and again he saith, Give her of the labour of her hands. A man must give his wife to understand, by words of comfortable approbation, what content he takes in her good and dutiful behaviour. He must animate and encourage her to a perpetuity of pleasing and loyal carriage, by some special courtesies, in which she will most delight : for the cheerful countenance, amiableness, affableness, and liberality of the husband, is to the good wife a cause of as great content as any thing in the world, next to the favour of God. Wherefore if ever thou wilt live happily in matrimony, feed virtue, nourish obedience, confirm all good qualities, water and refresh the tender buds of thrift, dutifulness, and other graces which begin to appear. Let thy wife see, that thou dost much more willingly look upon the best things,  
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and more often remember them, and that thou hadst much rather be telling of her good than of her evil, and making much of her than reprehending : for doubtless when all is done, experience shall prove, that the sweet herbs grow fairest and safest in the sunshine ; and many a wife had been very good, if the husband could have seen and fostered a little goodness at the first.



## C H A P. XI.

### *Of W I S D O M.*

**T**HE next virtue of the husband is wisdom, the eye of government, which must help justice in her place : for when virtues are knit together in a near band, one will draw on another. This wisdom is the helm of authority, which must guide it in an even and steady course, that it neither dash upon slavish fear, as a rock on the left hand, nor upon contempt, as a dangerous quicksand on the right hand. The principal use of wisdom is to behave one's self so uprightly, that love and reverence may not interfere, and the one cut and destroy the other. It is hard, of an inferior so familiar, so be loved and not slightly set by, if one's carriage be kind and familiar ; harder, if one's behaviour be more reserved, to be revered, and not slavishly feared. Prudence therefore must manage all things so, that it may keep these two affections in their due temper, free from excess, and free from defect, that a man may do good according to the dignity of his place : for affections will easily fall foul upon each other, and wound one the other, to the overthrow of both. Love will turn fear into a slender respect, fear will turn love into hatred and despight : but dis-

cretion must so serve the turn of both in due time and season, that both may be preserved in their due measure. More particularly, wisdom must give rules for the right ordering of authority, in general first, and then of each part of it.

First then in general, it is a main part of wisdom in an husband, to conform the use of his authority to the disposition of his wife, to which purpose he must labour much to become thoroughly acquainted with the temper of his wife's mind. There is great difference of women's natures. Some are more stiff, some more pliant, some will be more easily ruled, some with more difficulty, some require more sharpness, others will be better wrought upon with gentleness; and the master-piece of wisdom is, to frame all commandments, reproofs, rewards, and fitly to the conditions of the party. Some will be sooner persuaded than compelled, and some contrarily; which diversity of dispositions if a man mark not, he shall create to himself and to his wife a great deal of unnecessary labour. A soft, tender, and gentle woman must be dealt with more tenderly; a rough high-spirited woman with more sternness and severity, whether a man command or reprove, or whatsoever else he doth or speaketh. And in this case an husband must not follow his own inclination, but bow himself to the temper of his wife. Physicians give not the same physic to all bodies, and prescribe not such drugs as they have nearest hand, but as are best besitting the patient's body. Those also that deal in metals, give not the same heat to every metal; lead will be sooner and with more ease melted; iron must have more coals and more blowing. The husband must diligently observe by his wife's actions, whether she be lead or iron. A governor should know the constitution of those that are under his government, and behave himself towards them differently, according as they differ: as they are more given to grieve or chafe, to be dejected or to be careless, so must a man measure

measure out his actions, and the manner of them, that he may most heal (and least provoke) those passions wherewith the woman is most apt to be overcome. Neither will this prove impossible to attain, considering the continual occasion of conversing together will afford means of informing a man's self in this point, if he take but any reasonable heed thereof, and pray the Lord of heaven to furnish him with discretion. *St. Peter* points all men to this part of discretion, when he saith, Woman is the weaker vessel; meaning, subject to more natural imperfections than the man; and the proportion of that precept holds also in regard of the difference of the natures of women amongst themselves, some being weaker than some. Wherefore in this matter must the husband shew himself a man of knowledge in dwelling with his wife.

The example of our Saviour Christ's government may become our precedent: for he doth well consider, as the nature of all the members of his mystical body (for they be all but dust, and full of frailties) to the particular nature of each of them; by which it comes to pass, that some are fuller of infirmities than others. Christ's wisdom therefore shews itself in mixing a cup of consolation or affliction for every soul; every husband must carefully imitate his example, for if some women should be reprov'd so often and sharply as others, they would be quite disheartened; and some, if they should receive so great kindness and commendations as others, would be quite swoln up with pride. Now the art of government must moderate all things according to the nature of the governed: and this is it that maketh it so hard to govern well: but as I said before, the Lord, the giver of wisdom, will not deny it to them that crave this gift at his hands.

Wherefore all ye husbands know for a certainty, that it sufficeth you not to be just, unless you also be discreet. Thy commandments may per-



haps be not unlawful in themselves, but unfit for thy wife; and then, though thou mayest not be charged with unrighteousness, yet thou canst not escape the imputation of folly. Some man thinks, that his wife should do, and take all, as he sees such and such a man's wife, and accordingly he carries himself towards her, and looks to find at her hands, not considering that one last will not serve every shoe. And in this case, while most men will do as their neighbours do, and look that their wives should do as their neighbours' wives, they fill their houses full of contention; yea, many whilst they follow their own passions, utterly overthrow the peace of their families, because they will not do and speak what is fittest for their wives, but what holdeth most agreement to their own humours. Now be advertised (for the helping of many evils) that you must live with your wives, not alone as men of righteousness, but as men of knowledge also. And this is one rule of prudence in general, to know and observe the wife's disposition. Another is to chuse fit circumstances for commandments, reproofs, rewards, and all the acts of power or authority, viz. First, a fit time, then a fit place; for these are the most notable circumstances of all actions, and such as require our most heedful observation. For time; there is first time for reproving, commanding, commending, and all other actions. And again, a time which is very unseasonable for some, or for any of them; and to set down particular directions for that which admits of almost infinite variety, is a task altogether impossible. Wherefore in gross, two rules must here be stood upon, which will easily keep out all notorious inconveniences in regard of time. The rules, I confess, had most need be observed in matter of reproving, that being a thing wherein most weariness had need to be used, because it is most apt to be taken in ill part; and because it is most needful, and if it speed well does very much good; so a little thing will

will hinder the fruit of it, and make it prove very dangerous. Wherefore in administering it, most discretion had need to be used, that it poison not instead of healing. But yet in all the other parts of governing, the same rules are so universally necessary, that much mischief will grow in a family for want of observing them. A commandment untimely given, may do as much hurt as a blow; and an unseasonable precept may prove as pernicious as an unseasonable reproof. But let us shew what times prudence must chuse for the doing any act of government. Now, as in this case there are two persons to whom this authority pertaineth, namely, the person that exerciseth it, and the person towards whom it is exercised; so a time of reproving or commanding must be chosen agreeable to the disposition of both, and it must be then used, when he is fit to use it well, and she to take it well.

First then, when a man's self is quiet, in tune, free from perturbation; then may he wisely command, reprove, or do any other like thing, as occasion shall offer, that being a season when in all likelihood he shall do it well. But when anger boileth within, then is he to take due pains to bring himself into due temper again; and till that be done, to forbear the exercising of any part of his authority, unless he will disgrace himself through that faultiness which cannot but flow from such passions. Wherefore if thou art an husband, take this advice; authority cannot be well managed but by the hand of wisdom, therefore undertake not to exercise it when wisdom is banished. Go not about such a work but when thy heart is quiet, thy judgment clear, thy mind settled, and when thou art thyself; then shew thy wife her duty, then say what thou wouldst have, then tell her of her faults, else never shalt thou make her see her duty, or mend her faults. In a word, never go about to judge of colours, when  
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First then, when a man's self is quiet, in tune, free from perturbation ; then may he wisely command, reprove, or do any other like thing, as occasion shall offer, that being a season when in all likelihood he shall do it well. But when anger boileth within, then is he to take due pains to bring himself into due temper again ; and till that be done, to forbear the exercising of any part of his authority, unless he will disgrace himself through that faultiness which cannot but flow from such passions. Wherefore if thou art an husband, take this advice ; authority cannot be well managed but by the hand of wisdom, therefore undertake not to exercise it when wisdom is banished : Go not about such a work but when thy heart is quiet, thy judgment clear, thy mind settled, and when thou art thyself ; then shew thy wife her duty, then say what thou wouldst have, then tell her of her faults, else never shalt thou make her see her duty, or mend her faults. In a word, never go about to judge of colours, when  
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a mote is in<sup>a</sup> thy eye. And thus must a good husband keep time in regard of himself.

He must likewise observe due seasons in regard of his wife, those, namely, wherein she is capable of receiving information or reproof. If she be not fit to hear, as well as himself to utter wholesome words, the labour of uttering them must be lost. When she is quiet, cheerful, well pleased, free from excessive grief, anger, pain, sickness, (which dispose the soul to passion) or other like vexations, then is a due time of telling her of a fault, of wishing her to do or forbear what a man would have done or forborn, else her passions will make her as unable to take any thing well, as his will make him unable to do it well. Let the mind be calm, the judgment clear, the soul quiet, and then cast in good words, as good seed into the ground, that is plowed and manured, and well fitted for the seed. And he that cannot moderate himself in this way towards his wife, shall often make three or four faults in speaking of one; and make a breach by giving that commandment which at another time would be quietly accepted.

Another circumstance of moment is that of place, about which wisdom would that these rules be observed. First, That what parts of government carry with them any difficulty and distaste be exercised betwixt them two, *viz.* Reproving and commanding of things that in all likelihood may be against the mind of the wife: but, secondly, what parts are pleasing to her, or no way contrary to the good-liking of nature, as the giving of commendations, rewards, or easy commandments, be done also, as occasion serveth, before others. For hard commandments and reprehensions, the secretest place is the most convenient; because, if the wife at first hearing receive them passionately, no man might be acquainted with her passionateness. And because she may not have the least occasion of taking up that conceit [which will



will blast the fruit of all good admonitions] that this he speaks to put her to disgrace. Wherefore if any thing be amiss, whereof thou wouldst admonish thy wife, take her aside, and let her hear from thee, when she is well assured, that no ear should be privy to thy words but her own. If thou wouldst have her to do or forbear any thing which thou thinkest will be displeasing to her to hear, shew thy mind in private, and there persuade, where thou mayest with more freedom speak all that is fit to be spoken; and where [if some little heat should arise betwixt you] it may not be published to the hurt of your names. It may be objected, That some women will not fear to offend in public, before the servants and children, and strangers: and what then? Shall the husband forbear to speak to her, and let her go away with it so? Would not this prove infectious to the beholders, and make them apt to follow the same trade of evil doing? I answer, if such public faults fall out, a man may shew his dislike in a patient manner of speaking, and make it appear that he doth not wink at his wife's faults. But I answer again, that in such a case he must express grief rather than anger, and must leave the lawful sharpness, and [as I may call it] wholesome lancing, by a reproof, till his wife and himself be together alone; and by that time she will remember how she overshot herself, if he give her not the advantage of replying, by being carried into some absurdity with her for company. Neither need a man fear the infection of servants or children by faults thus healed in secrecy; for his present grief, dislike, and patience, will work more upon them, [considering the person] than if he should fall on chiding; and there will be time enough after, in her absence, to give them warning of the sin, there will be time enough also to chide her for having given so bad an example. And they may know that a man hath reproved, tho' they hear him not reprove; and this will well  
enough

enough prevent the infection that might come from her offence. Wherefore in no sort is their rashness to be allowed ; yea, it is most sharply to be condemned, that must needs out with it whoever stands by, even before children and servants, and perhaps also strangers, not having the wit nor power to refrain themselves till a fit place of privateness may be gotten. And so have you those rules of wisdom that concern the exercise of authority in general. Those follow next, which particularly concern the matter of direction, which must look partly to the things commanded or forbidden, partly to the frequency of commanding.

For the first, a man must not abase his authority, to two sorts of things that are not worthy the same, namely, to things trifling, nor to things ridiculous.

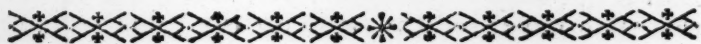
First then, let it be regarded in commanding, that the man's authority descend not unto too mean and trivial things. The husband must not be bidding and intermeddling by commandments in the small businesses of the family ; he must leave some things in the family to the discretion of his wife, that his authority may not be undervalued, because of the triflingness of those matters about which it is employed. In these things he should permit his wife to rule under him, and give her leave to know more than himself, who hath weightier matters, and more nearly touching the welfare of his household, to exercise his knowledge in. And if in any of these matters, he shall meet with any disorder, it were a part of wisdom in him to advise and counsel, rather than to charge and command. See therefore that the matter be so much worth before thou lay a charge concerning it ; for he that for every light thing will be drawing out his commandment, shall to his grief, perceive at length, that it will be much esteemed in nothing.

Secondly,

Secondly, Let him never command senseless and unreasonable things, such as are grounded merely upon his will, and upon no good reason besides. Such commandments will make her take him for an heady fool, and not a wise head; and that conceit can never arise, but with the utter ruin of her reverence, and so of his authority. For a man to enforce his wife by the power of his authority, to take up a feather, to wag a straw, or the like; because forsooth he will have it so, and shew that he is her master, exposeth him to contempt, and in making it appear that he is master over her body, he ceaseth to be master over her heart. I confess the woman should be so perfectly subject, as to cast her eyes only upon the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the thing commanded; but the husband should consider further, and look that what he gives in charge be commodious, useful, and needful to be done. He that without reason enjoins his wife to do any thing, doth all one as if he should ride without a bridle. If such a man's horse be not exceeding gentle and well broken he cannot chuse but either run out of the way, or stumble and cast the rider: So the wife of such a foolish man must be of extraordinary meekness and patience, or else she will either rebel against him or condemn him, or both. For the reasons wherewith the commandment of any superior comes backed, is as it were a bridle in the inferior's judgment, by which they may check and hold in the violence of unruly passions; but if reason be wanting, even a gentle-natured woman is apt to prove refractory. Look therefore that thou never bid thy wife do any thing which reason [and not only will] hath not first bidden thee. And these be the rules of prudence, in regard of the subject of authority, or matters wherein it should give directions.

Another is, for the frequency of exercising it: let this part of power be but rarely used: It should be laid up as one's best attire, to be worn alone  
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upon high days. A garment that comes upon a man's back every day will soon be threadbare, so will a man's authority be worn out with overmuch use. Wherefore let it be kept in, till due occasions of using it call it forth. It hath been delivered as a means of a prince's preserving his reverence amongst his subjects, that he be not too often seen amongst them. Men are apt to set light by those things which they see every day ; even things at first wondered at, are, by little and little, slenderly regarded if they be of common use. Take heed therefore that thou layest thine authority upon things but seldom, lest thy wife [receiving many commandments] break some, and so catch a custom of neglecting thy power. A man that is much in commanding, shall hardly chuse but slip into some trivial and unnecessary commandments; and one of these will lighten his authority more than twenty of better use shall grace it again. The wife is indeed an inferior, but very near, and very familiar ; wherefore she will count it a burden to be ever pressed with authority ; and you know that nature teacheth us to seek ease in shaking off burdens. Much reproofing will make a reproof of no force, much more will much commanding make commandments of no efficacy. And thus have you the rules of wisdom, which must keep authority, as it were, upon the wheels, that it may go forward more cheerfully, both for the husband and the wife's comfort.



## C H A P. XII.

*Of M I L D N E S S.*

**T**HE next husbandly virtue is mildness, a very necessary virtue in this society ; which [because it comes nearest to equality] doth therefore allow

allow of familiarity betwixt the parties governing and governed, and therefore must needs also require more lenity. No woman can endure her husband's government with comfort, if gentleness do not temper it. The abundant love that a wife doth and may look for, causeth that she looks also for much tenderness of behaviour from her husband; in which expectation if she be crossed, she cannot obey heartily, because not lovingly, nor lovingly, because she cannot think herself loved. The Lord *Jesus Christ* is the most gentle and meek governor in the world; and when he requir-eth us to take his yoke upon us, He commends himself to be gentle and meek, and his yoke to be light. This is the best precedent that husbands can follow, the most worthy copy for them to write after. The Apostle telleth us that the minister must be gentle, even towards those that are froward: Surely then the husband must be gentle to his wife, though she shew herself to be of a froward disposition. Yea, we are commanded to shew all meekness to all men; and therefore much more each man to his own wife. But this virtue must shew itself in both the parts of authority, directing and recompencing. In directing two ways: First, for the matter of it, or the things whereabout it is exercised; Secondly, for the manner of exercising it.

In the matter of directing, this virtue must manifest itself two ways; first, by not using it too often, and too much; secondly, by not using it [unless upon necessity] about things that will prove difficult and tedious. For the first of these, the husband must beware of extending the use of his commanding power too far; it must suffice him to know, that God hath given him the right of appointing in every thing that is not sinful; but in the exercise of it, he must shew himself of a kind and free nature, not rigorously taking upon him to command all he may, but willingly gratifying his wife in some, in many, in most things,

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that she may with more cheerfulness be subject to him in others. Obedience would be allured and inticed, by yielding it to its own disposition, in almost every thing of an inferior nature, that it may more dutifully yield itself to be disposed of when greater necessity requireth.

But especially, let husbands shew mildness in the second point, *viz.* in forbearing hard and difficult commandments, so much as they possibly may. Beware of crossing your wives, and forcing them to things against their natural disposition. All men find in themselves a kind of inbred averfeness from such or such things, and a delight in some other things; so that the one of them it is a great burden for them to do, the other to forbear. Yea, some things there are of their own nature hard and painful to be done. Now it is a great point of gentleness in the husband, to forbear the requiring of obedience at his wife's hands in things of this nature, unless a kind of necessity lie upon him to require it. The schoolmaster that overtasketh his scholars, shall never make them learn well. The king that over taxeth his subjects shall make them poor, and himself hated; so shall the husband weary his wife, and disgrace himself, by laying too heavy commandments upon her. Wherefore let every good husband put away this rigorousness, and by moderation in his commandments, make his authority easy to be borne, and his wife cheerful in subjection. And this is gentleness in the matter of direction.

The same virtue must be used in the manner of commanding. When need requireth that some commandment be given, it must not be imperiously prescribed, in the extremity of enforcing words, but with a sweet kindness [as the head doth move the members of the body] with loving persuasions and familiar requests. Indeed, if the wife will needs try masteries, and strive to cast off the yoke of obedience, such her distemper makes it needful, for the husband [with good words]

words] to stand for his authority, even somewhat stiffly and peremptorily, professing, that he will have his will in things lawful. But this course should be seldom used, and that only in matters of importance, that may be worth so much earnestness; in most cases, the quieter way is the more comfortable, and the more husband-like. The way, then, to prevail with least burden to the inferior, and toil to the superior, is with mild words to wish this or that, rather than with imperious phrases to enjoin it; for most natures are much more easily persuaded than compelled. Our Saviour *Christ* himself doth mostly beseech his church, though with most right he might command it. Let the husband imitate that best husband, and beware of, "Do it or you had best;" and "you shall whether you will or no;" and "I will have it so, if it be but to cross you." O no! much more comely for an husband's mouth, are these words: I pray you, let it be so; do me the kindness to do this or this. And so much, for the practice of mildness in directing, the first part of government.

It must be likewise exercised in recompensing both good and bad actions: For the good, when a reward is given, it must be gently given; and in bestowing any gift upon a man's wife, he must do it in a kind fashion; so that the manner may grace the matter, and make it more pleasing. But chiefly gentleness must shew itself, when need requireth that bad deeds be requited with reproof or correction; for there it is so much the more needful, by how much the actions themselves are less pleasant in themselves, and therefore will less bear the mixture of any bitterness with them: and for reproofs, mildness must shew itself in regard of the matter of reproofing, and also the manner: For the matter, in not finding fault with every trifle that one sees amiss, nor chiding for every infirmity. Whatsoever fault is not of somewhat a gross nature, or else done in somewhat a pre-

sumptuous manner, may be passed by in silence, either with none, or half a word. That happy effect of love, which consisteth in passing by wants and weaknesses, is exceeding necessary towards strangers, much more towards those of the household, most of all betwixt the nearest couple of the household. Be not, therefore, extreme nor rigorous in this matter ; but as a mother's tenderness of love doth cause, that she takes no notice of divers little deformities in her own child, so stand thou affected to thine own wife. Pray to God against all her faults ; see and commend all her virtues : but petty wants, and natural ordinary weaknesses, never take notice of, never reprove. Let her closely perceive that thou dost [but wilt not] know them : thine unwillingness to see and reprove, shall make her more willing to see and reform. But an ever-lowering and ever-chiding husband, will make more faults than would be, and compel his wife to be far worse, than her own disposition would work her to. Wherefore be not always chiding, unless thou wouldst have thy wife always naught ; for over-frequent reproofs can bring forth nothing but disdain and fullness.

Again, for the manner of reproving ; when it is most needful, it must be very gentle. The words and gestures used to press a fault upon the wife's conscience, must be mild and amiable, such as breathe out love and pity at once. A reproof must be applied as a plaister, not with rating, but with moaning. It can hardly be avoided even in the best, but that this medicine shall be necessary : yet the husband must ever remember, to use no more roughness than is fit to his own flesh. Reproofs of themselves [as it were a potion] go enough against the stomach : we need not, by our bitterness, make them more loathsome [as it were] by a foul and unsightly cup. No patient was ever yet so desirous of health, that he could be persuaded to drink a potion scalding hot : that which  
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burns the lips, will never find admittance into the stomach, be it never so wholesome a drink otherwise. It is just so with a reproof : If it scald the ear (as I may say) with upbraiding and disgraceful terms, with villifying and railing words, with a fiery look, and a sparkling eye, it will never gain passage to the heart. Compassion, kindness, the declaration of one's sorrow for his fault, desire of his good, care of his amendment that is reprov'd; these are the things that frame the will to accept of an admonition, and much help the kindly working thereof. I am not against the wholesome earnestness of reprov'g, and that sharpness of rebuking, which in some cases the Lord himself commands : but this may well be without bitterness, without violence of words, and without fierceness. An admonition is then healthfully sharp and earnest, when a man in much plainness of speech, and strength of reason, lays open the greatness, absurdity, danger of the sin, enforcing the consideration of these points, upon the party's conscience vehemently ; but yet still pitifully ; with a declaration of more sorrow than anger, and of grief for his fault and danger, rather than displeasure against his person. Such earnestness, husbands must be allowed to use ; for coldness will hinder the working of medicines. In one word, let a man make his reproofs somewhat warm, but not boiling hot. And this is mildness in reproofs. And thus you see, in what things an husband's mildness must be exercised : And so also you have a sufficient direction for him in the matter of governing, the first part of his duty. We must now descend unto the second part, which is maintaining his wife.

## C H A P. XIII.

*Of maintaining one's Wife.*

**A**S our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the husband of his church, hath been in nothing wanting to her spiritual welfare, but doth clothe her with the pure and white linen of his own righteousness, and with the rich and precious graces of his good spirit, whereby she is all glorious within; so must every good husband afford his wife allowances of all necessary comforts for this life, that she may live a cheerful and well-contented life with him. Before a man allure a woman into copartnership of life with him, he should consider of means to maintain both himself and her; for how it should stand with love, to pull so near a companion into the troublesome fellowship of misery and want, I cannot conceive. Doubtless, it is a man's wanton passion that spurs him forward, to run blindfold into this estate, and not the good hand of God leading and calling him unto it, unless he be furnished in some measure, with things fit to maintain a wife and family. When the Lord, by his good allowance goes before us, and wisheth us to follow him into any estate, he gives us wisdom to look before-hand, that we have all things necessary in some degree, to perform the duties of this estate; but when our own passions thrust us forward into any course, they make us run headlong after our own appetite, not troubling ourselves with any such wise and serious considerations. I think, therefore, I may say, that the Lord is author to no man, of wedding a wife to misery and distress. Before he call him to marry, he will let it appear unto him, how (at least by the diligent painfulness of his hand) he may yield his wife a comfortable living. Not but that a poor man also may have



have both need of marriage, and also allowance to marry; for God forbid, that violence should be offered to the consciences of those of meaner estate, by laying such a share upon them, as if they might not lawfully enter into matrimony. But this we say still, that they must have some honest calling, and will, and ability to walk in the same faithfully, that reason may tell them, through God's blessing, there shall be something gotten to maintain a wife, though not richly, yet sufficiently, and according to their rank. For it was never God's meaning that all should be rich, neither yet would he have any to be beggars. Let not any man, through distrust of God's providence, deny himself the benefit of God's ordinance, when his need requireth it, for the subduing of otherwise unsubduable passions; neither yet let any man so easily condescend to the desires of his own heart, as hastily to adventure on matrimony, till he have used all other due means of repressing such passions, (watchfulness, abstinence, praying, fasting, and all earnest oppositions,) when in reason he can give no sufficient answer to this demand; how shall we do to live, when we are married? I know that the over-covetous desire of elder people, doth many times stand too much on such matters, and cares not to thrust the younger upon miserable inconveniences, through an unbelieving distrust, and fear of poverty. And I see, on the other hand, that the younger are apt to cast themselves upon such rocks, for want of due considering of such matters, as to make shipwreck of peace and quietness, and a good conscience too. Wherefore let a middle course be followed here. Thou mayest please God in a poor estate, and mayest afford a wife comfort in a meaner condition; but still somewhat there must be to live on; some calling, some trade, something that may promise that, which God promiseth to the diligent, *viz.* that they should be satisfied with bread. So this duty must take up part  
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of a man's thoughts before he be married ; and (after the contract of marriage) he must still continue these thoughts, often looking to it, that his wife may want nothing needful for her. Wherefore, let each husband be convinced, that it is his duty to allow his wife convenient maintenance, and not to think himself so absolutely lord of all, but that his wife must also enjoy the comfortable use of all. But we must also direct the husband in this part of his duty, by shewing him three necessary things : First, the measure ; secondly, the manner ; thirdly, the times and seasons of this his allowance. For the first, two things must measure out her expences, as well as his own ; and those are his place and his means, so far as his calling requireth, and his ability will bear ; and no further must he extend his cost in attire, and other necessaries for his wife. Not either of these, but both these, must be advised with : for sometimes a man's place, or function in the commonwealth, would bear more than his decayed estate will well suffer.

You see in what quantity the wife's allowance must be given. Consider, also, in what manner, and that must be most willingly, cheerfully, readily ; before she asketh, he must answer ; and offer before she request. The greatest commendation of a gift, is the giver's cheerfulness ; and the surest sign of cheerfulness, is speed and expedition. Do to her, as God to his saints ; and willingly and abundantly give her all things to enjoy : And this do, both whilst you live together, and at thy decease also, if it fall out, that thyself depart this world first. For so (which is the third thing I intended to speak of) there are two seasons, in which the husband's bounty should declare itself ; the first, during life ; the second, after it.

The love of an husband must not die before himself, no, nor with him : but the effects of it must survive him ; and when himself is departed,  
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his bounty must be present with her, even after death. When a man is to leave this world, he must not leave the care of his wife, but remember, in the disposing of his goods, to bequeath so full a part to her, as may make it appear, that he thinks not himself wholly dead, so long as she (the one half of him) is alive. Let thy wife, even after thy death, enjoy such a part of thy substance, as that she need not stand beholden to her children (that in all reason should have them beholden to her); neither let thy wife's insinuations make thee more sparing to thy children than is fit; nor let thy fondness to thy children, make thee more regardless of thy wife than is fit; but be sure, as thine estate is, to let her have wherewithal to live like a mother, they like children: for doubtless, the wife hath wrong, if her husband do not provide so for her, that the children shall want occasion to despise her in her age.



#### C H A P. XIV.

##### *Of the Wife's peculiar Duties.*

THE Wife's special duty may fitly be referred to two heads; first, she must acknowledge her inferiority; secondly, she must carry herself as an inferior. First then, every good woman must suffer herself to be convinced in judgment, that she is not her husband's equal; without which, it is not possible there should be any contentment, either in her heart, or in her house. Where the woman stands upon terms of equality with her husband, much more if she will needs account herself his better, the very root of all good carriage is withered, and the fountain thereof dried up: out of place, out of peace. Who-  
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ever, therefore, doth desire, or purpose to be a good wife, or to live comfortably, let her set down this conclusion within her soul : Mine husband is my superior, my better ; he hath authority and rule over me ; nature hath given it him, having framed our bodies to tendernefs, men's to more hardnefs ; God hath given it him, saying to our first mother, *Thy desire shall be subject to thine husband, and he shall rule over thee.* His will I see to be made by God the tie, not of mine actions alone, but of my desires and wishes also. I will not strive against God and nature, though my sin have made my place tedious, yet will I confess the truth ; Mine husband is my superior, my better. Unless the wife learns this lesson perfectly, if she have it not without book, and at her fingers ends (as we speak) if her very heart do not inwardly and thoroughly condescend unto it, there will be nothing betwixt them but wrangling, repining, striving, and a continual vying to be equal with him, or above him ; and so shall their life be nothing else but a very battle, or a trying of masteries. Let us grant, that in gifts thou art his better, having more wit and understanding, more readinefs of speech, more dexterity of managing affairs, and whatsoever other good quality may be incident to a woman ; yet understand, that so may thy servant exceed thee as much, as thou dost him. Hath not many a servant more wit and understanding (and often more grace too) than a master and mistress put together ? Yet loath would the wife be, that the servant should deny both her husband and herself the name of betters. Know then, that a man may be superior in place to one, to whom he is inferior in gifts ; and know also, that thou dost abuse the good parts God hath given, in seeking thence to infringe thine husband's superiority : And better were it for a woman to be of mean capacity (so that she can put upon her the spirit of subjection), than to be adorned with all the good qualities of nature (for those of grace she cannot have,

have, so long as her pride is so predominant) and thereby be made self-conceited against her husband. Wherefore, O thou wife, let thy best understanding be to understand, that thine husband is by God made the governor and ruler, and thou his inferior, to be ruled by him. Though he be of meaner birth, and of lesser wit; though he were of no wealth, nor account in the world, before thou didst marry him, yet after this, God will have thee subject, and thou must put upon thyself a willingness to confess thyself so to be. This duty had so much more need to be pressed, because, though it be so plain, as it cannot be denied; yet it is withall so hard, that it can hardly be yielded to: But unless the judgment be truly informed, and soundly convinced of this point, the will and affections will never be kept in good order: Set it down, therefore, as a conclusion, not so much as once to be called in question; My husband is my better.

Secondly, the wife being resolved that her place is the lower, must carry herself as an inferior; for it signifies little to confess his authority in word, if she frame not herself to submission in deed. Now she shall testify her inferiority in a christian manner, if she practise those duties of reverence and subjection. First, for reverence: The wife owes as much of that to her husband, as the children or servants do to her, yea, as they do to him; only it is allowed, that to her it be sweetened with more love and more familiarity. All inferiors owe reverence, neither must the wife conceit, as if she were less bound to reverence her husband, than are the rest of the family. This alone is the difference: She may be more familiar, not more rude; as being more dear, not less subject than they. And this reverence of hers must be both inward and outward: First, the heart of the wife must be held under, inwardly, with a dutiful respect of her husband; she must regard him as God's deputy, not looking to his person,  
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but to his place; nor thinking so much who and what an one he is, as whose officer. This the apostle directly enjoineth, saying, *Let the wife see, that she reverence her husband*: As if he had said, of all things, let her most carefully labour not to fail in this point of duty; for if she do, her whole carriage must needs be unbecoming. The Apostle's meaning is to prescribe a fear [not slavish, but loving,] such as may well stand with the nearest union of hearts, as is to be seen between Christ and his church. This fear of the wife is, when [in consideration of his place] she doth abhor and shun it as the greatest evil that can befall her, next to the breach of God's commandments, to displease and offend her husband. We stand in due awe of God's majesty, when we loath the breach of his commandments, and grieving of his Spirit, as the greatest of all evils; and the wife doth duly fear her husband, when next to the former evil, she shuns the disobeying, grieving, and displeasing of her husband, who is the next to God above her. Such regard must her heart have of her head, that it may keep her hand and tongue, and all from disorder. I know this is not customary among the greater number of women, yea, they scarce esteem it a seemly or a needful thing that it should be so; yea, they care as little for their husbands, as their husbands for them. But if thou wilt ever prove a virtuous wife, take much pains with thine heart, to make it stand in awe of thine husband; and know, that God hath not, for nought, given the former caveat unto women. As a woman grows in this inward respect, so may she look to get the better of all other infirmities; as she is careless herein, so shall she be pestered with all other enormities. But how shall a woman bring her heart to this regardful disposition? I answer, by looking through her husband to God the author of marriage, and putting herself often in mind, not of his deserts, but of God's ordinance. If one consider an inferior

ferior officer (in himself) he cannot sometimes but disdain him for his meanness, if he consider him as the King's officer (intrusted with a part of his royal authority), his reverence to his prince, will produce some reverence to his officer for his sake. The husband is to the wife the image and glory of God. The power that is given to him, is God's originally, and his by God's appointment. Look not, therefore, on the qualities of thine husband, but upon his place; and know that thou canst not neglect or despise him, but that the contempt redoundeth unto God's dishonour, who hath ordained him to be thine head; so if religion have seasoned thine heart with the fear of God, thou shalt fear thine husband also, for his commandment also. But as the wife's heart must be affected with this loving fear, so must her outward carriage shew it, and that in two special things: First, in her words; secondly, in her behaviour. Her words are either to himself, of him behind his back, or to others before him; all must have a taste of reverence. First, her speeches to himself must neither be sharp, fullen, passionate; nor yet rude, careless, nor contemptuous; but such as carry the stamp of fear upon them, testifying, that she well considers who herself is, and to whom she speaketh. The wife's tongue toward her husband, must neither be keen nor loose; neither such as argues anger nor neglect, but favouring of all lowliness and quietness of affection; that if another should stand by and hear them, he might perceive (though he knew not otherwise) that these are the words of an inferior to her better. Look what kind of words thyself wouldst dislike from thy servant or child, those must not thou give to thine husband; for the same duty of fear is in the same words, and in the same plainness commanded to thee, that is unto them. Forbear then all speeches, favouring of passion; but beware also of words that may bewray contempt. I told you before, that it was the privilege of a

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wife (because of her dearness) that she may be familiar : But yet I have observed an excess of familiarity that deserveth to be blamed. Why should a woman bear herself so over-bold of her husband's kindness, as to nick name him with those nick-names of familiarity, *Tom, Dick, Ned, Will, Jack*, or the like, as I have heard good wives do ; but (I confess) with a distaste of their rudeness : for could a woman speak otherwise to her child or servant, than in such kind of abbreviated names as these ? Certainly the woman's love must be tempered with fear ; and those speeches of hers, which would show kindness, must also have a print of reverence upon them, or else they are not allowable. Wherefore let wives be taught (in speaking to their husbands) to learn of her, that called her husband by an honourable name. Leave *Tom* and *Dick* to call thine husband, *Husband*, or some other name of equal dignity. And thus must a woman's tongue be ordered towards her husband, when she speaks to him.

She must also look to her speeches directed to others in his presence, that they may be such as may witness a due regard of him. His company must make her more careful of her behaviour to any other before him, than otherwise she need to be. Her words to children and servants, in his sight and hearing, ought not to be loud and snappish. If she perceive a fault in them, she must yet remember, that her better stands by, and therefore must not speak but upon necessity, and then utter that reproof in a more still and mild manner, than in his absence she might. No woman of government will allow her children and servants to be loud and brawling before her, and shall she herself be so before her husband.

Thirdly, The woman's speeches of her husband behind his back must be dutiful and respectful. She must not talk of him with a kind of carelessness or slightness of speech, much less with reproachful

proachful terms. Herein the godly fact of *Sarah* is commended to our imitation, and must be put in practice; when she but thought of her husband, in the absence of all company, she did reverently intitle him by the name of *my Lord*. Who would bear a child speaking disgracefully, and murmuringly, against his own father, though behind his back? And shall it be thought sufferable in a wife? He that allows not an evil thought of the prince, will not allow evil speeches of the husband.

Thus must a woman's words be ordered towards her husband. Something also must be spoken of her gestures and countenance, which, as well as her words, must be mixed with reverence, and have a taste of fear. Both good and bad dispositions have more ways of uttering themselves than by the tongue. *Solomon* speaketh of an eye that despiseth the mother: surely then the eye also of the wife may be a despising eye, and her whole behaviour and gestures may proclaim contempt, though her tongue be altogether silent. Now these also must be looked unto, that they may not discover a base esteem of her husband. Rude and contemptuous behaviours are no less uncomely in an inferior, and do no less displease a superior, than the most fierce and outrageous speeches would do. Wherefore as herself will condemn these in her children towards herself, so let her by no means allow them in herself against her husband, towards whom the Lord hath bound her, as well to practise reverence, and fear, as any of her inferiors unto her. For still it must be pressed upon the hearts of wives, that familiarity is allowed them, but no rudeness.

The second special duty of a wife is subjection. Now that hath also two parts; the first is, obedience to her husband's commandments; the second is, submission to his reproofs. For the first, the apostle doth plainly give it in charge to women, saying, *Let the wife be subject to her husband in all things.*



*things.* What need we further proof? Why is she his wife, if she will not obey him? And how can she in his name require obedience of the children and servants, if herself refuse to yield it unto him? For doubtless she can expect it none other-wise than as his deputy, and a substitute under him. But the thing itself will not be so much questioned, as the measure: not whether a wife must obey, but how far her obedience must extend. To which doubt the Apostle hath yielded us a plain solution, saying, *In all things in the Lord.* Obedience you see, must be general; only, so that it be in the Lord. In whatever matter a woman's yielding to her husband shall not prove a rebellion against her Maker, in that matter she is bound in conscience to yield unto him, without any further question. Neither yet sufficeth it, that her obedience reach to all lawful things, unless it be also performed willingly, readily, quietly, cheerfully; without brawling, contending, thwarting, sourness. And thus you have heard the first part of subjection, obedience; a duty which, I doubt not, seemeth hard enough to woman-kind. But the second part of subjection is yet more hard, and withal equally, if not more needful, that is, submission in receiving reproofs from their husbands; as she must willingly obey all his lawful commandments, so must she patiently suffer all his reprehensions. Is not this duty plainly required in those words? *As the church is subject to Christ, so must also the wives to their own husbands in every thing.* Doubtless, to bear reproofs is a necessary part of the church's subjection unto Christ; neither shall it discharge its duty in striving to obey, unless where it faileth it be content to be chidden: wherefore it is impossible for women to loose their consciences from the bond of this subjection, unless they could shew (which they shall never be able to shew) some other text of Scripture limiting and abridging this.

C H A P.



## C H A P. XV.

*Containing some Application of all.*

**A**ND first, this ministers a good instruction to young and unmarried people, that they do not unadvisedly rush into this estate. A thing of such difficulty should not be slightly undertaken. They shall have their hands full of duty, if they get not their hearts full of grace, and their heads full of wisdom ; they shall find an house full of trouble, and a life full of woe, meeting with gall instead of honey, and gravel instead of nourishing morsels. Wouldst thou be married ? See what wisdom, what patience, what grace fit to govern, or fit to obey, thou findest in thyself. Get these against thou come to use them, or else marriage will not yield thee such contentment as thine imagination promiseth. Vain youths grow wanton, and must marry before they have any power to practise, any understanding to know their duties. He that leaps over a broad ditch with a short staff, shall fall in the midst ; and he that enters upon matrimony without great grace, shall be mired in disquietment and vexation. Let unmarried people think of this, and be wise.

Secondly, I must advise all married persons to grow acquainted with these duties, and to mark their failings in the same. But mistake me not : I would that the wife should know hers, the husband his ; and both, the common duties. I desire that they should each mind their own, not so much each other's failings. Indeed it may be feared, that divers hearers now will be worse for hearing, because they heard amiss. The husband may perhaps ring his wife a peal of her duty when he comes home, and tell her how her faults were ript up, and yet never consider his own duties or faults.

faults. The wife also may likely tell him of his own at home, when she hath little or nothing to say to herself. Thus both shall be worse, when they seek to upbraid each other, not to amend each one. Thou, husband, didst listen attentively when the woman's duties were handled ; " there he met with my wife ; " " such a time she shewed little reverence, less obedience." Thou, wife, hadst the like thoughts concerning thy husband : " There he told him home of his duty." " It is not long since he shewed himself neither wise nor gentle." " I would he would see to amend." Unwise man, unwise woman ; why hadst thou not most care of thine own soul ? Couldst thou mark what was good for another's disease, not what for thine own ? Wilt thou grow skilful in his way, and not know one foot of that wherein thyself must travel ?

Brethren, Sisters, let this be altered in us : If thou be a christian husband, have more care to know that, and be more frequent in considering that, for which thine own soul must answer, than what lies to the account of another. So do thou that art a christian wife. And that man or woman that sees not more faults and failings in him or herself than the yoke-fellow, bewrays a wondrous great pride and ignorance, if he or she be not matched with one too notorious. If the heart were well touched, its own sins would be more grievous, the husband's or wife's less. Contend therefore not how short thy yoke-fellow comes, but not to come short thyself. Pass by the other's failings more easily, be more censorious towards thy own : this were to deal as a christian, even to judge thyself. He never yet learnt to work well in any work, that would cast his eyes more upon his neighbour's fingers than his own : neither was he ever a good scholar, that would con his fellows, and not regard the task imposed upon himself. And that makes husbands and wives such ill paymasters one to another, because they look often  
what

what is owing to them, not what they owe. I doubt not but experience will back my speech, if I pronounce, that they be not the best husbands and wives which are heard to complain much of their yoke-fellow's defects in duty, little of their own. And yet is not this ordinary? Every man would be a good husband, if his wife were not so bad; and she a good wife, if he were not so excessive faulty. All the accusations, all the judgments, are darted at each other. What folly is this? Understand, idle man or woman, that it is not the requiring or receiving of duty from others, but the knowing and performing of what pertains to thyself that will make thee a christian, comfort thee in temptation, rejoice thee in death, and stand for thee in judgment. And yet art thou so loud and much in calling for duty, so dumb and ignorant in yielding it!

To conclude therefore, know thine own duty best, mark most thine own transgressions of duty, then shalt thou be free from brawls with thy yoke-fellow, if thou be taken up with pains about thyself: and there is no better means of peace in families, than that every one should learn and ply his own work, see and labour to mend his own faults. Have you then been both or either unchaste, unloving, unfaithful? Repent both, and strain not courtesy who shall begin; but let either set the other a copy of goodness. And if you will needs strive, let it be, which shall be best, which mend first. Hast thou been a foolish, passionate, unjust husband, full of bitter words, perhaps also (which is monstrous) of blows given causelessly, and in anger, not regarding thy wife's good, so thou mightest go away with thine own will? Dive not into her faults; cry not out, she hath been thus and thus to me; but repent of thy bitterness, unthriftiness, folly of all sorts: confess it to God; beseech him to make thee a better husband, that thy wife may be better. Hast thou been a disdainful, contemptuous, brawling, impatient, or disobedient

obedient wife? Ask thine heart before God, and dissemble not. If yea; clamour not against thine husband's folly, exclaim not of his rashness and hardness, but condemn thyself before, and call upon God to make thee reverence and obey thine husband as a commander under him. Entreat him of mercy to make thee better, that thy husband also may be better. Follow the proverb, and "Let every one of you mend one," I mean himself, and contention will cease. Pray for each one's self first, then for each other. Where you have offended, labour to see it, confess, bewail, and call for power to reform, and be not skilful to cast the fault upon another, but to cast it upon thyself. So shall your loves be sure, your hearts comfortable, your example commendable, your houses peaceable, yourselves joyful, your lives cheerful, your deaths blessed, and your memories happy for ever.

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